# The Quintessence of SIKHISM

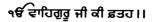


Dr. Gobind Singh Mansukhani

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### Foreword to the First Edition

The literature on Sikhism is meagre and therefore this book on this religion is welcome. I am glad that scholars have realised this deficiency and have taken the responsibility of acquainting our countrymen and others with the principles of Sikhism.

I have gone through Dr. Gobind Singh's book entitled "The Quintessence of Sikhism."

I find that the author has very lucidly and briefly dwelt on the important and basic concepts of Sikh religion and culture. The book will be appreciated by all those who like a hand-book which deals with the major top cs Sikh history and religion.

I believe, with the author, that Sikhism has a great future on account of its universal principles and faith in man's future. I commend this book wholeheartedly and hope it will be followed by similar studies on Sikh scriptures and traditions.

HUKAM SINGH Speaker, Lok Sabha, New Delhi.

#### Preface to the Fourth Edition

The first 3 editions were widely acclaimed and appreciative reports were received from readers all over the world. In response to the wishes of some keen students of our religion, particularly in the United Kingdom and United States of America, the fourth edition of the book has been brought out.

I wish to acknowledge my gratitude to the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee for their cooperation in the publication of this work.

Gobind Singh Mansukhani

January, 1997

#### INTRODUCTION

God sends His messengers into the world from time to time to guide humanity. Such a messenger was Guru Nanak. He regarded himself as a humble servant of God called upon to remove the ignorance, superstition and evil practices of his contemporaries. He went to different parts of the world to preach his message, not with a view to start a new religion, but rather to tell the people how they could be better followers of the religion they already professed. His aim was the spiritual transformation of man. His teaching contained also the best elements of Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam. Just as a bouquet is a bunch of flowers and yet has a separate entity, in the same way, Sikhism came to be regarded as a distinct faith. This view is supported by Macauliffe, Dorothy Field, Duncan Greenlees, S. G. Champion and Dorothy Short\* and Prof. A.E. Suthers\*\*. Guru Nanak affirmed that his revelation come directly from God. He

<sup>\*</sup>S. G. Champion and D. Short: Readings from World Religions, Fawcett Pub., 1959, P. 269.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Harbans Singh: Something about Sikhism, Intr. by E.A, Suthers, Prof of Comparative Religion, Delware, 1929.

had a direct vision of the Truth. The very first sentence that he uttered after three days' divine contemplation was: "I am neither a Hindu nor a Muslim". Undoubtedly, the Ten Gurus spoke to the people around them, including Hindus and Muslims. Naturally, they had to persuade the people to get rid of their superstitions and wrong notions in a language which they followed. That is why Sanskrit, Desi, Persian and Arabic words occur in their compositions. The fact that Hindu Bhagats and Muslim Fukirs gave expression to certain common concepts, as for instance, the absurdity of religious ritual, the hatred of idolatory, castelessness and the equality of man and woman, does not make the Guru's gospel any the less original. Even in the days of the Second Guru who popularised the Gurmukhi script, Sikhism came to be regarded as a distinct faith, deffering radically both from Hinduism and Islam. Undoubtedly, it is Indian in origin and yet a new revelation. The Sikhs have their own scriptures, their sacred city and their Founder and line of Gurus. Besides, the distinct ceremonies at the time of birth, baptism, marriage and death make it a distinct religion.

In understanding any religion, we must make

a distinction between ends and means. Foms. symbols and precepts are only means and not an end in themselves. The novice or the pilgrim may be held in the beginning by these forms and precepts. But the goal is God-vision or merger in the Infinite, which is outside and beyond the rosary, Path or Pilgremage. Moreover, religion is nothing if it does not lead to the building of character of the individual. Service of humanity through good deeds is enjoined by Sikh religion as a step towards the realisation of God. Sikhism like other great religions believes in monotheism, submission to His will, equality of man and woman. It, however, rejects the path of renunciation (Tyaga) or austerities (Yoga), the authority of the Vedas and the Hindu caste system. It emphasises the leading of a house-holder's life (Grasta), unattached to gross materialism, the doing of works of service\* (Sewa), and joining Kirtan and the company of the blessed—Satsang.

"The best religion in the world ensures

Meditation on the Word and noble actions."
(A.G.)\*\*

Sikhism possesses all the elements which a world religion should have. Its insistence on

<sup>\*</sup>Real service must be unselfish, spontaneous without expectation of reward and in harmony with the Will of God.

\*\*A.G. means Adi Granth—the scripture of the sikhs.

the brotherhood of all mankind, its plea for equitable social and spiritual opportunities for all types of men, its emphasis on the service of man and the practice of a moral code and, above all, its recognition of the divinity of man and the need of meditation have made it a subject of great interest in the countries of the West. Moreover, its simplicity, its easy understanding by the ordinary man, its belief in the One-ness of God and the practice of the Holy Name have endeared it to the potter and the peasant, the high and the low.

The word "religion" etymologically means. "re" – again, "legio" – to join, that which joins us to the source of all life. In Sikhism, the goal is God-vision or merging into the Supreme Being. The Guru says that if one has been forwnate enough to get this human life, one must make the most of it by trying ceaselessly to realise God. This is man's opportunity to practise the presence of God. God is within us. In Him we live and have our being. It is not for the individual soul to wait for something external. The guru says, "He that dwells in the universe also dwells inside the body. He who seeks Him shall find Him" There is need of effort or Sadhana. The effort lies in of

evil thoughts and the doing of good deeds, the service of the people and the company of evolved souls (Sat Sang). Finally comes the absorption in the Name,\* which in its turn leads to Union with the Divine—the summum bonum of human life.

It is difficult to offer a comprehensive definition of a Sikh, but we have some working definitions. Any one who solemnly declares that he believes in the Ten Gurus and Guru Granth Sahib, and has no other religion is a Sikh. But to my mind, more belief in teaching is not enough. A true Sikh is one who follows the Guru's teaching in daily life. The dual ideal of a Sikh's life is meditation and action. He remembers God and at the same time exerts himself for doing noble actions. He earns his bread with the sweat of his brow and then spends his earning not only on himself, but also on the needy and the poor. Plain living and high thinking is not only a motto, but also a living reality for him. A true disciple must get rid of superstition and fear. He must be patient and devoted. He serves one and

<sup>\*</sup>The Name also called the Word is the symbol of God. As God is the God of Will-the Creator -He used the Word to express Himself. Hence the Word is also the Will of God.

all without any distinction. Bhai Gurdas mentions that a true Sikh believes in the sanctity of family life and in the dignity of manual labour. He lives in the world but keeps himself unattached to the possessions of the world. He relies on the Guru and is ever ready to do the Guru's bidding.

The Sikhs are mainly of two types—Sahij-dharis, that is apprentices or beginners or livers-at-ease, and Amritdharis, that is those who have been formally baptised and are called Singhs. Both are required to recite Gurubani and perform good deeds. The Amritdharis have some additional responsibilities and have to maintain the symbols ordered by Guru Gobind Singh as members of the Khalsa.

The true disciple possesses the ability to discriminate between the true and the false, between the eternal and the transient, between right and wrong. He has also the power to act according to the dictates of his conscience. The true disciple does deeds, but remains indifferent to their results. He dedicates all to the Guru. He does not sit in expectation of the fruits of his actions. He controls his thought and conduct. He insists on freedom of belief and worship and is not

keen on thrusting his beliefs on others. He tolerates rival faiths and creeds. Above all, a true Sikh tries to be worthy of the grace of the Guru, so that he may gain peace of mind and eternal happiness.

Ethics and normal morality are the very bases of religious life. Evolution of the spirit is not possible without righteous conduct and observation of social morality.

Morality is not an end in itself. It is merely an aid to the developing of spiritual life. Sin is a definite obstacle on the path of divinity:

Conceit is the ruin of the soul,

Anger in mind causes uproar,
Lust makes satanic rage,
Self-will undermines faith,
Slander darkens the mind,
Greed makes a man repine;
Adultery leads to infamy,
Power breads tyranny."\*
Virtue draws the good soul nearer to God.

Man is not potentially weak or evil. He is born with certain divine and progressive tendencies. But in many cases, the temptation of evil is so strong that man does not come up to the

<sup>/\*</sup>Adi Granth.

standard of virtue expected of him, namely to speak the truth, to avoid sin, to be fair and just to others. The inspiration and aid come from the guide or the Guru. In moments of difficulty or in the face of evil, the Guru enables the disciple to make the right choice and to tip the scales in the direction of success. Moreover, virtue is to be supplemented by a spirit of sacrifice in order to get the best out of life. Selfishness and egoism cut at the very roots of social progress. It is for this reason that the Guru insisted on Sewa, acts of love and charity - "The Brahm-giani delights in doing good to others." These acts in themselves not religious acts or deeds of merit but they are helpful in preparing the ground for the elimination of selfishness and egoism. They show our love for humanity and help in relieving distress and misery.

Sikhism was destined to uproot the superstitions and false notions that had crept into Hinduism and Islam. Many Hindu omens were exposed by the Sikh Gurus. Guru Amardas says: "Good or bad omens are the invention of an ingnorant mind." Drawing omens from meeting a widow or a corpse, from a conjunction of stars or constellations, or worshipping tombs and dead bodies of heroes and ancestors, drawing conclusions from cries of animals or twitterings of birds, belief in impurity (Sutak) at birth or death, all these were denounced by the Gurus. They showed the right path. Real impurity is that which pollutes the mind. It is lying, greed, lust and vice: "Real impurity is not associated with physical matter, but lies in forgetting God."

The Muslims too, though monotheists, disregarded the *Koran* and some of them practised infanticide which was forbidden by their scripture. They also worshipped tembs and graves.

The Guru rejected superstition in whatever form it raised its head. Superstition is the result of ignorance and darkness. Guru Arjan says: "The egg of superstition has burst; the Guru has shed light all round."

## PART I. SIKH HISTORY CHAPTER I

#### The Ten Gurus

1. India before Guru Nanak. India in 1469 was under Muslim domination. For about 400 years before the birth of Guru Nanak, India had been suffering from predatory invasions of foreigners. The people had abondoned their spiritual treasure and consequently lost the power of united action and defence. Moreover, they were divided into castes and classes at war with one another. The rulers were corrupt and ease loving. The weakness of the Lodhis was a signal for the invasion of Babar.

The lot of Hindus, to say the least, was unsatisfactory. Their religious practices and social customs were at the mercy of their fanatical rulers. At any moment, they could be banned. Hindus suffered from political slavery and many of them were compelled to embrace Islam. Learning was confined to the Brahmins; the masses of the middle and lower classes wallowed in the mire of ignorance, poverty and superstition. The upper class Hindus on the other hand

illtreated the Shudras and the untouchables in the same fashion as they were treated by the Muslims. The tyranny of caste rules further accelerated the degradation of Hindu society. Women were disrespected and mal-treated. Most of the people resigned themselves to their lot and became totally pessimistic and cynical. Ruthless taxation, social tyranny and sterile faith made the lot of the average Hindu unbearable.

The Muslims, though comparatively in a better position than the Hindus, were also unhappy. Their rulers were corrupt and unprincipled. They propagated their faith and their political views at the point of the sword. The position of Muslim women was far from satisfactory. The malefolk regarded them as objects of sexual gratification and treated them accordingly. They were distrusted and confined within the four walls and kept under purdah. The evil custom of female infanticide crept into the community. Even the practice of Sati\* was not unknown among Muslim families.

Guru Nanak was born at a critical period in Indian history. It was the darkest before the

<sup>\*</sup>D. Greenlees—The Gospel of Guru Granth Sahib, page XXII.

dawn. Guru Nanak says, "The age is a dagger, the rulers are butchers. Dharma has taken wings and darkness of falsehood prevails\*. Undoubtedly there were gleams of light and signs of the coming renaissance in the emergence of Namdev, Chaitanaya, Kabir, Surdas and other saints. Here and there, saints and mystics gathered some people and gave them messages of spiritualism and cheer. Guru Nanak taught courage, discipline and self-respect to the people, showed how man could live religion in daily life and awakened people to the meditation of God through the practice of the Name.

2. Guru Nanak (1469-1539). Born on the 15th April, 1469, at Talwandi, now in Pakistan, Nanak in his early age showed signs of greatness. At the age of five, he taught the Brahman and the Mulla the spiritual significance of the letters of the alphabet. Then he was deputed to look after the grazing of cattle, but he would mind God rather than cows. His father tried to put him in business but to no avail. Guru Nanak got in tune with the Infinite, while weighing flour as a salesman at Nawab Doulat Khan's store. At the age of 38, in August 1567, Guru Nanak

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth: P. 145.

heard God's call to dedicate himself to the service of humanity. The very first sentence which he uttered then was, "There is no Hindu, no Muslim." He now thought of visiting different countries to preach his doctrine.

During the first journey (1507-1515), Guru Nanak visited Aiminabad (Bhai Lalo's home) and converted Malik Bhago. The Guru refused to partake of the feast of Malik Bhago, because his income was derived by exploitation of others. He went to Hardwar, where, by throwing water in the western direction, he convinced the people of the folly of offering manes to souls of their ancestors. Then he went to the east, to Benaras and Gaya and finally Kamrup (Assam) where he reclaimed Oueen Nurshah. He then went south to Puri and Rameshwaram and then back to Dwarka, and Delhi. He visited Kurushetra at the time of the fair and gave his message to masses of pilgrims. He returned to his nativeplace via Lahore after touring the eight years.

During the second journey (1517-1518), Guru Nanak went to Sialkot and further north to Mount Sumera via Srinagar. There he met the Siddhas whom he preached the value of Grista Ashram and meditation. From there, the Guru returned home to Kartarpur.

During the third journey (1518-1521), the Guru went towards the west, first to Bahawalpur, where he converted Saijan Thug, and then to Sind. He toured the region near Karachi and stayed at the place where now stands Akal Bunga Gurdwara. Then the Guru proceeded to Surat and from there to Mecca. At Mecca, he converted the priest by showing him that God's place is in all directions and not merely in the Then the Guru went to Medina and thereafter to Baghdad. It is said that Guru Nanak composed Japji at Baghdad. Guru Nanak returned to India via Peshawar and Hassan Abdal (Walikandhari's place). At this time, Babar had attacked India and there was a great slaughter of civilians at Aiminabad. The Guru went up to King Babar and got the prisoners released. He saved the people from further misery and bloodshed.

During the last stage of his life (1521-39), Guru Nanak radiated love and faith to the Sangat at Kartarpur. There was daily Kirtan, and Guru Nanak preached to the congregation. He also wrote many hymns which were later incorporated in Guru Granth Sahab.

Knowing that the end was drawing near, Guru Nanak tested his sons and all his followers, and finding in Bhai Lehna his worthy successor, he installed him on the *Gadi* on 2nd September, 1539. Then covering himself with a white sheet, Guru Nanak passed into *Sachkhand*.

3. Guru Angad (1504-1552). Bhai Lehna (afterward called Guru Angad) was born in 1504. He was a worshipper of the goddess Jwala Mukhi. While going on a pilgrimage, Bhai Lehna met Guru Nanak and was so much attracted by him that he refused to go to Jwala Mukhi or home, and stayed to serve the Guru. He led an extremely pious life, in obedience to the Guru. Guru Nanak tested in various ways, and found him perfect in every way. Bhai Lehna was an embodiment of obedience and service. He was installed as the second Guru in 1539. Guru Angad was fond of children and used to play and eat with them. He popularised the Gurmukhi script, thereby breaking the monopoly of learning enjoyed by the Brahmans of the time. increased the number of literates and popularised religious literature. He gathered facts about Guru Nanak's life from Bala and other disciples. and wrote the first life of Guru Nanak Dev in Panjabi prose.

In order to spread the message of Guru Nanak, Guru Angad extended the free kitchen

(Langar), personally looking after the cooking and serving arrangements. The Langar served a dual purpose—on the one hand it removed all caste-distinctions, because all people had to sit at one place like equals, and on the other hand, it provided a field for charity and service. It also strengthened the bond of union among the Sikhs.

Defeated by Sher Shah, Emperor Hamayun came to see Guru Angad. He was told to wait. The emperor grew impatient and drew his sword. The Guru reproved him for his haughtiness and told him that he would have to go to his native-place before he regained the throne. This prediction was borne out by subsequent historical events.

Guru Angad passed the last days of his life at Khandur. A new but elderly disciple, Amardas, uncle of his daughter Amru's husband, became attached to him. So great was Amardas's love for the Guru that he would cover the distance from Khandur to Gowindwal, about five miles, walking backwards at dead of night to bring water for his beloved Guru. Finding that his sons were disobedient, Guru Angad set Guru Amardas on the Gadi on 29th March, 1552.

4. Guru Amardas (1479-1574). Bhai Amardas became Guru at the age of 73. This was a result

of his service of and devotion to Guru Angad. This naturally enraged Datu, the son of Guru Angad who kicked him at Gowindwal. Guru Amardas in all humility said, "Sir, pardon me. My hard bones must have hurt your foot. The Guru left Gowindwal and retired to his own village (Basarki).

Guru Amardas propagated the Sikh faith zealously. He divided the country into 22 dioceses (Manjis) each under the charge of a devout Sikh. Daily Kirtan was held in these assemblies(Sangats). The Guru trained 146 travelling missionaries who went to different parts of India to preach Sikhism. He fixed three festivals for Sikh congregations: Dewali, Vaisakhi, Maghi. These gatherings led to greater contact among the Sikhs.

Some mischief-mongers reported to Akbar that the Guru was creating dissessions among the people. The Guru sent Bhai Jetha to the imperial court, who was able to convince Akbar that all the allegations against the Guru were false.

Guru Amardas established cordial relations with emperor Akbar. The Emperor visited Gowindwal and wanted to see the Guru. He had to eat the ordinary meal of the Langar before he could have an interview with the Guru. He

offered a grant of land for the Langar, but the Guru declined to accept it. Hence, the grant was made to the Guru's daughter, Bibi Bhani. The Raja of Haripur, likewise, had to sit in the Langar and eat with others, before he could be admitted to the presence of the Guru. By this method, Guru Amardas removed the social and caste prejudices of the people, so that they could live together as brothers.

Guru Amardas propagated Sikhism in northern India. He went to Kurukshetra and Hardwar with his disciples and was exempted from the pilgrim tax. He preached against Sati and advocated widow-remarriage.

During this period, Srichand, son of Guru Nanak, founded the *Udasi* sect, enjoining upon his followers *Brahamchara*, and renunciation of home and property. Guru Amardas counteracted this move and appealed to the people to lead a family life and yet remain unattached. This was a blend of asceticism and worldliness, what he called *Grist-mai-udas* renunciation in the midst of the world. The Guru felt the need of creating a centre for sikh worship. So he got a *Bawli* (well with 84 steps) built at Gowindwal.

Guru Amardas was fortunate in his son-inlaw named Bhai Jetha. He served the Guru zealously and was therefore nominated as the successor. At the ripe old age of 95, Guru Amardas passed on the mantle to Guru Ramdas in 1574.

5. Guru Ramdas (1534-1581). Bhai Jetha (later called Guru Ramdas) was installed as Guru at the age of forty in 1574. He had proved a worthy and devout son-in-law and had richly deserved spiritual succession. One day, Bhai Srichand visited Guru Ramdas and in a humorous vein asked the Guru why he kept such a long and flowing beard. The Guru remarked, "Just to wipe the dust of your holy feet." Srichand was over-come by the Guru's sincerity and humility and bowed to him.

Guru Ramdas secured a piece of land from neighbouring Zamindars. This land was associated with the name of Guru Nanak who is said to have stayed there in a hut. The Guru established a new township for the residence of sikhs and propagation of sikh culture, which was to be called Ramdaspur. The city was bound to flourish as it was situated at the centre of traderoutes. Zealous sikhs helped the Guru and settled at the new site. The Guru got the tank dug by voluntary labour of his followers. The city was subsequently called Amritsar.

Guru Ramdas organised mission work (Parchar) and sent round massands to collect regular offerings from his scattered disciples. The Sikhs were advised to contribute one-tenth of their incomes for religious and charitable purposes. The Guru was very fond of serving his own disciples. He would pull the Pankha (fan), draw water and share the food of the common kitchen. The Guru also directed his followers to minister to the wants of travellers and wayfarers. Bhai Gurdas says, "A sikh becomes happy when he satisfies another's wants."

The Guru's friendliness with Akbar made his mission popular with the upper classes\*. Some of the aristocrats came to Amritsar and became his followers. The Guru utilised his friendship with Akbar by relieving oppression and heavy taxation.

The Guru's youngest son Arjan was much devoted to his father. At the bidding of his father, he went to attend a marriage at Lahore. But he was feeling the pangs of separation from his master and wrote two letters requesting that he be recalled: "My soul yearns for the sight of

<sup>\*</sup>G.S. Mansukhani: Guru Ramdas, His Life, Work and Philosophy.

the Guru. It laments like the *Chatrick* crying for the rain." These letters were intercepted by his elder brother Prithi Chand. When the third letter reached the Guru, he recalled him and installed him as the next Guru. So in 1581, the mantle of Ramdas fell on the young shoulders of Guru Arjan.

6. Guru Arjan (1563-1606). Installed as the fifth Guru at the age of 18 (1581), Guru Arjan completed the work of his father by building Harmandir (Temple of God) in the midst of the beautiful tank. This is now called the Golden Temple, one of the wonders of India.

The Guru opened another centre of worship at Tarn Taran, where also a big temple and tank were built for the comfort of devotees. A house for lepers was also built near the temple.

The Guru now took up the work of consolidation. The order or massands established by his predecessor attracted lots of devotees. The Guru served the congregation and led the prayers and kirtan. In Amritsar Sikhs from different parts of India met annually at *Baisakhi*. The massands collected offerings and deposited them in the Guru's treasury.

In order to help the Sikhs to settle in Amritsar, the Guru encouraged them to start new

trades. Some of the new trades were banking, embroidery, carpentry and horse-trade. The Guru sent his followers to Turkestan for purchase of horses which were subsequently sold in India. This brought a lot of money to sikhs and the Guru's treasury. Moreover, sikhs developed a taste for riding and in due course became the finest horsemen of India. The Guru now weilded great influence over the community. The community had acquired a good deal of power and prestige.

Prithichand, Guru's elder brother, started plotring against the Guru. He sent a report to emperor Akbar that the Guru was creating communal dissessions, but Akbar knew the Guru pesonally and therefore paid no heed to Prithi chand's allegations.

Guru Arjan was a man of the masses. When Raja Birbal imposed a tax on the *khatris* of Amritsar, Guru Arjan refused to pay it. Raja Birbal proceeded to Amritsar with an army to collect the tax, but fortunately, he was called to face the rebels on the N.W. Frontier. The spirit of the Guru to challenge unjust taxation and to face the consequences show that he was ready to suffer inorder to uproot tyranny. This trait of

accepting suffering for a good cause raised the tone of the Sikh society of the time.

The most important work of Guru Arjan was the compilation of *Granth Sahab*. He felt the need of a scripture for the sikhs. So he persuaded Mohan, the son of the third Guru, to give him copies of the hymns of the first three Gurus. To these he added the hymns of his father and his own. Meanwhile, the Guru made selections from the verses of Indian *Bhagats* and Bhatts. All these hymns were collected in the form of a Sikh scripture called the *Adi Granth Sahab* and formally installed at *Harmandar* in 1604. The Guru ordered that the hymns be translated into Indian and foreign languages so that the gospel may be known to entire humanity."

After the death of Akbar, emperor Jahangir became jealous of the Guru's increasing influence and prestige, and ordered his arrest and torture. The Guru suffered all tortures in a spirit of patience and resignation. The end came in 1606 when Guru Arjan's body floated on the waters of the river Ravi near Lahore.

7. Guru Arjan's martyrdom. Guru Arjan was a successful organiser and nation-builder. He therefore became the target of Moghul ire.

Sir John Malcolm writes: "The jealousy of the Mohamedan government was excited and he was made its sacrifice." Jehangir in his autobiography expresses his resentment at the Guru's propagation of Sikhism: "Either I should put an end to this traffic, or that he should be brought within the fold of Islam." He, therefore, thought of incriminating the Guru. Chandu, his minister, was already a sworn enemy of the Guru, because the latter had rejected his daughter's hand for his son's matrimonial alliance. Moreover, Prithi chand poisoned the mind of the emperor with stories of the so-called seditious activities of the Guru, specially his helping Prince Khushro in distress. The Guru was brought to Lahore to answer two charges—that he had committed sedition in helping Khushro, the emperor's son, and that he had created communal dissession by compiling Granth Sahab. He was even asked to change the hymns of the Granth Sahab. With regard to the first charge, the Guru replied that he, on Khushro's begging, gave him charity, as he would give any other man in distress. As regards the change in the text of Granth Sahab, he could never allow it: "The True King has inspired these hymns and they are informed with spirit of God. I cannot alter the sacred word".

At the Guru's refusal to erase certain passages from the Granth Sahab, Jahangir ordered his imprisonment and asked Chandu to deal with him. Chandu insisted on the Guru's accepting his daughter in marriage for his son, but the Guru refused because the Lahore Sangat had branded Chandu as a vain oppressor. Chandu devised for the Guru new tortures like pouring of boiling water, throwing of burning sand and seating him on a red-hot iron plate. But the Guru never lost his calm and patience. He told Mian Mir, the muslim saint, to forbear because he was setting an example of heroic patience to the Sikhs. Guru Arjan was giving a practical demonstration of resignation to the Will of God: "Whatever Thou givest, I treat as Happiness". Wherever Thou "placest me, there shall be my heaven." The end came on 30th May, 1606, when the Guru passed away into God's Abode. The life of Guru Arjan is an outstanding example of martyrdom. blood of martyrs is the seed of the church. The long list of Sikh martyrs since then is due to the example set by Guru Arjan Dev.

8. Guru Hargobind (1595-1644). The mantle of Guru-dom fell on the eleven year old Hargobind. His childhood was full of accidents

and trials. His uncle Prithichand twice attempted to kill him, once by sending a cobra and second time through a professional poisoner, but fortunately the Guru did not come to any harm. He suffered from small-pox and recovered after a serious illness. The Guru knew that hard times were ahead. The Moghuls wanted to break the power of the Sikhs. He, therefore, organised a small band of soldiers and accepted gifts of horses and muskets. The Sikhs were becoming martial and preparing to challenge the might of the Moghul rulers. Some historions call it the establishment of a military theocracy.

Jahangir got suspicious of Guru's preparations and had him imprisoned in Gwalior Fort. After the lapse of a long period, the Guru was ordered to be released. He refused to leave the jail till all other royal prisoners were freed. At the Guru's insistence, all the prisoners were set free. The Guru was called *Bandhichhor* or the Holy Liberator. Shortly afterwards, Nemesis overtook Chandu who was dragged, paraded in the streets, and killed by the mob.

A change had taken place in the character of Guru-dom on account of the force of circumstances. It had become both religious and militant.

Guru Hargobind carried two swords, one of spiritual power—Peeri—and the other of military power—Meeri. The Sikhs had earned popularity for their courage. They had thrown a challenge to the Moghul power and opposed a cruel and corrupt administration. The martyrdom of Guru Arjan was bearing fruit, because the Sikhs now undertook the task of liberating the masses from tyranny and oppression.

9. Guru Hargobind's achievements. The transformation of Sikhism from a holy and peaceful group into a military and war-like community began soon after the installation of Guru Hargobind as the sixth Guru He was a versatile leader, a saint as well as a warrior. He carried the sword and hunted with the hawk. He wanted to challe use oppression and to inculcate courage and heroism in his followers. He enlisted his followers in his military service. According to Cunningham, he had 800 horses, 300 horse-men and 60 artillery-men trained in the art of warfare.

Guru Hargobind fought three battles which were thrust on him and in these he was successful. The first battle was due to the forcible capture of Guru's horses by the governor of Lahore. A

battle was fought at the outskirts of Amritsar in 1628; Mukhlis Khan commanding the Moghuls, many times the number of Sikh troops, was routed. Soon afterwards, there was a skirmish with the Nazim of Jalandhar in which the latter was slain.

When Bidhichand retrieved the two horses of the Guru from the Nazim of Lahore, the latter sent an expedition. The Guru was victorious in the battle of Lehra in Malwa in 1631.

The third battle of the Guru with the Moghul army was waged in April 1634 at Kartarpur. Painda Khan, a soldier of the Guru, had quarrelled with the Guru over a peety matter and sought the help of the emperor. The Moghul army under Painda Khan was defeated. Painda Khan was wounded, but was protected from the heat of the sun by the Guru. The Guru asked him to read the Kalma—Painda Khan was a staunch Muslim—before he met his end. These victories created confidence and courage among the sikhs. Guru Hargobind popularised the cult of the sword for purposes of defence and justice.

10. Guru Har Rai (1630-1661). At the tender age of 14, (1644) Har Rai, the grandson of Guru

Hargobind was installed as the seventh Guru. He was an embodiment of love and mercy and led a peaceful life of selfless serince and self-discipline. He was fond of kirtan and meditation. He told his followers to ponder over the hymns of *Granth Sahab*, and whenever any hymn was recited to him, he would rise and fold his hands in reverence.

Guru Har Rai was a man of peace and seldom meddled in politics. Dara Shikoh sought the Guru's blessing for success against his brother Aurangzeb who had usurped the throne. When Dara was attacked by Aurangzeb's army,the Guru sent a small sikh force to cover his flight. Dara fled but was evently excuted by Aurangzeb. Emperor Aurangzeb was angry with the Guru for helping Dara. He called him to this court, but the Guru sent his eldest son Ram Rai to represent him. This man worked miracles and even changed a line of Guru Sahab to please Aurangzeb. Guru Har Rai was very much displeased with the doings of Ram Rai and resolved not to see his face again.

One day, the ancestors of the erstwhile rulers of Patiala, Nabha and Jind came to the Guru's darbar crying for food and patting their bellies in

token of hunger. The Guru was gracious enough to prophesy kingship for them, which they acquired soon afterwards.

The Guru was extermely fond of his devotees. One day he sat in a certain posture from sunrise to sunset, because Bhai Gobind of Kabul held him love-fettered with devotion. Similarly, one morning he went to the house of a holy woman and demanded the bread which she had baked for the Guru. Knowing that the end was near, Guru Har Rai installed his child Har Krishan as the eighth Guru and passed away on 6th October, 1661.

11. Guru Har Kishan (1656-1664). Guru Har Kishan assumed the responsibilities of Gurudom at the tender age of five. He lectured to his disciples and healed the sick and looked after the poor.

Ram Rai, Guru's elder brother, complained to Aurangzeb that he as the eldest son has been passed over for succession in favour of Guru Har Kishan. The emperor summoned the Guru to Delhi. The Guru was not willing to go to Delhi, but at the repeated requests of the sangat of Delhi agreed to go to the Capital.

Guru Harkishan showed great powers as a boy. Once a Brahmin questioned him about the meaning of the Gita. The Guru called a passing water-carrier, and with the Guru's grace, this unlettered man was able to expound the philosophy of the Gita, where now stands "Panjokhra Sahab" in Ambala district, much to the amazement of the crowd.

One day Raja Jai Singh requested the Guru to find out the true queen. He was surrounded by equally well dressed ladies so that it was difficult to say as to who was the queen. By his exceptional power, the Guru went to a lady dressed as a slave and sat in her lap. This lady was the real queen.

Guru Har Kishan kept busy at Delhi in healing the people suffering from the epidemic of cholera. The Guru stayed at the place where Gurdwara Bangla Sahab now stands. Soon afterwards, he fell ill. The Guru called his mother and told her that his end was drawing near. He was only eight years old then. When asked to name a successor, he merely exclaimed, "Baba Bakale", meaning that the next Guru would be found in the village of Bakala. He told his mother and disciples not to mourn for him, because he

was casting off the mortal coil in obedience to the Divine Will. He passed away on 30th March, 1664, repeating Wahguru till the end.

12. Guru Tegh Bahadur (1621-1675). Gur Har Kishan had uttered a crypic word, implying his successor would be found at Bakala. As many as 22 imposters proclaimed themselves as Guru in this little village. Bhai Makhan Shah a devout sikh, whose merchandise-laden boat the Guru had saved from capsizing, found out the true Guru in Sri Tegh Bahadur and proclaimed him to the world in 1664.

The Guru liked a life of calm and retirement and yet his rivals gave him no peace Dhirmal who was a claimant to succession hired a man who shot at the Guru, but fortunately the Guru got slightly injured and soon recovered. When the culprit was brought to the Guru for punishment, the Guru forgave the assailant, saying that forgiveness is divine and revenge is an evil passion. Dhirmal who had abetted this offence was also pardoned and *Granth Sahib* was restored to him. Similarly, when the Guru went to Amritsar to visit the *Harmandar*, the priests closed the doors against him. He foregave them and proceeded further.

The Guru was full of pity for suffering humanity. To him, life was transient and the only abiding thing was the reality of the Name. Just like a bubble of water, the world dissolves away, never to rise again. His hymns are full of devotion and pity for the people. In one of his saloks, he says,

Man blinded by the intoxication of Maya Pays no heed to the spirit, Says Nanak, without devotion to the lord Man shall fall into the noose of death.

The Guru established a new centre called Anandpur. He then toured the south-west corner of the Punjab, visiting many villages. He then went to Benaras and Gaya. At Patna, he left his family, and proceeded to Assam, on a mission of peace. At this time, hearing of the birth of a son to him, he returned to Patna. He then proceeded to the Punjab, leaving his family at Patna. After five years, his wife and son joined him at Anandpur.

Emperor Aurangzeb took up the work of conversion in right earnest. He propagated Islam by threats, force and undue influence He regarded the killing of Hindus (kafirs) as a religious duty. He sent a message to the Pandits of Kashmir to

embrace Islam. The Pandits led by Kirpa Ram in their great distress came to Anandpur to solicit Guru's help. Guru Tegh Bahadur said that evil could be conquered by good. If a saint challenged Aurangzeb's tyranny and offered himself as a sacrifice. Hinduism could be saved. At this moment, his child Gobind interrupted him and said, "Father, you are the best person for offering this sacrifice." The Guru was surprised at the courage and vision of his boy who was only nine. He realised that Gobind was fit to be his successor, and having nominated him as the Tenth Guru, he proceeded to Delhi to challenge the tyranny of Aurangzeb. The emperor asked the Guru to make a choice between Islam and death. The Guru told him that even prophet Mohamed could not impose one religion on the world. He would be mistaken if he thought that he could do so. The emperor subjected the Guru to various tortures to try his patience and to break his spirit. But the Guru remained calm in those trials. Finding that the Guru would not recant, Aurangzeb ordered that the Guru beheaded at Chandni Chowk. The Guru recited the Japji and as the stroke of the executioner fell on his head, a great storm swept the land. During the storm. the head fell into the hands of a sikh Bhai Jetha

who took it to Anandpur for cremation. The body was burnt by another sikh Lakhi Shah Vanjara at a place where now stands Gurdwara Rakabganj. This brutal and wanton murder (1675) shook the very foundation of the Moghul empire. The Sikhs wanted a strong leader to stop the genocide of Hindus and Sikhs.

13. Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom. example of silent suffering for one's religion was set by Guru Arjan Dev. This lesson impressed the heart of Guru Tegh Bahadur. A martyr is a witness (Shahid from Shahdat, means bearing testimony) to the reality of his faith and truth. The martyr is ready to lay down his life in order to prove the truth that he holds dear. He is not afraid of pain or torture. There is a smile on his lips and God's Name on his tongue. The man who is in tune with the Infinite does not feel physical pain or injury. His body and soul rest at the feet of the Supreme Being. Death holds no fears for the evolved soul; Death is welcome to the heroic soul when it upholds an approved cause. Guru Tegh Bahadur opposed the tyranny of Aurangzeb and his silly notion of spreading Islam at the point of the sword. Evil can be conquered by good. A good soul is used in

overcoming an evil soul, but ultimately truth stands vindicated. Guru Tegh Bahadur faced death because he wanted to protect Hinduism. Guru Gobind Singh writes about his father in Vichitar Natak:

"He protected the frontal marks and sacrificial thread of the Hindus,

He showed great heroism in this dark age,

He gave his head but revealed not the secret, He suffered the martyr's fate for the sake of religion.

Tegh Bahadur is no more: the world says, 'alas! alas!'

The heaven sings blessings, welcoming his return home,

The angels sing 'The victor comes home: the victor comes home!' "

The example set by Guru Tegh Bahadur bore fruit because so many Sikhs after him refused to recant and faced death for their religion and the protection of the weak.

14. Guru Gobind Singh (1666-1708). Installed as the Tenth Guru at the tender age of nine (1675), Guru Gobind Singh thought of making

preparations for the great task ahead of him. The tyranny and challenge of Aurangzeb had to be met. So, for about ten years, the Guru lived peacefully at Anandpur and Paonta practising arms and exercises to complete his training as a soldier. He also studied Persian and Sanskrit and engaged 52 poets to translate the Hindu epics. Stories of ancient heroes were translated into Punjabi in order to create the martial spirit among the Sikhs. The Guru also wrote several compositions including Jaap Sahab, Akal Ustat and Sawayas during this period. He also established a new Gurduwara at Paunta Sahib on the banks of the river Jamna.

The Guru admonished hill Rajas including Raja Bhimchand for submission to the Moghul ruler and paying tribute to him for holding their positions. His efforts at winning their support against Aurangzeb bore no fruit. On the contrary, the hill Rajas conspired with the Moghul armies to crush the power of Guru Gobind Singh. They however faced defeat several times at the hands of the small Sikh army.

The Guru received various complaints against the priests—massands—who robbed the poor Sikhs and misappropriated the collections. The

Guru abolished this order in 1698 and severely punished the miscreants. Hereafter, the faithful were to bring their offerings direct to the Guru at the time of the annual *Baisakhi* fair.

The Guru wanted to create a strong self-respecting community. He inspired the Sikhs with courage and heroism and a life of simplicity and hard work. He started an arms-factory at Anandpur in order to manufacture swords and lances needed for his soldiers. Once when the Brahmins insisted that he should offer worship to goddess *Durga* in order to win victory, he agreed and kept up the farce till nothing came out of it. At the crucial moment, the Guru unsheathed his sword, exclaiming, "The sword is the *Durga* which will give us victory over our enemies."

On the 29th March, 1699, Guru Gobind Singh held a big Diwan at Kesgarh Sahib. Sikhs from different parts of India came to make their offerings. After the usual prayers, the Guru suddenly drew his sword and asked the audience: "Is there any true Sikh of mine who is ready to die for Dharma?" After a moment's silence, one Sikh named Dayaram stood up and offered his life. The Guru led him to an enclosure; it seemed he had cut him up and come out with

the sword dripping blood. He again asked the audience for another head and one Dharam Das responded to his call. He was also taken to the enclosure. Then the third man who offered his head was Himathmal. The fourth disciple was Mohkam Chand and the fifth was Sahib Chand. These five Sikhs were brought out from the enclosure and seated before the Guru. These five were called *Panch Piyara* who were the first to be baptised with *Amrit* by the Guru.

The Guru stirred the water placed in an iron vessel with a two-edged sword reciting the five Banis. A this time, his wife Sahib Deva brought some sugar-peliets (Patasa) and put them into the water. The Guru then gave each of these five sikhs five handfuls of this water to drink. Five handfuls, he sprinkled on the hair, and five on the eyes of each, and every time they repeated the Sikh greeting: "Wahguru ji ka Khalsa, Wahguru ji ki Fateh." He told them to keep the five Kakars (each beginning with the latter K) Kesh-hair, Kanga-comb, Kachha-knicker, Kara—wrist band and Kirpan—sword, to protect the weak and to be ready for fight. He further said, "I wish you all to embrace one creed and follow one path, obliterating all differences of religion. Let the four Hindu castes alone, which

have different rules laid down for them, abondon them altogether and adopting the way of cooperation, mix freely with one another. Let no one deem himself superior to another. Do not follow the old Purans. Let none visit the Ganges and other places of pilgrimage which are considered holy according to the Hindu religion, or adore Hindu deities, but all should believe in Guru Nanak and his successors. Let men of the four castes receive my baptism, eat out of the same vessel, and feel no disgust or contempt for one another." These five were the Khalsa, the pure ones. Then he requested them to administer Amrit to him in the same way. It was a dramatic scene—the Guru kneeling before his own disciples for Amrit. How wonderful is Guru Gobind Singh! He treated his disciples as his equals.

The next batch of five was called *Panch Mukt* (the five liberated ones). Thousands of Hindus and Harijans took *Amrit*, and in the life-time of Guru Gobind Singh, more than 80.000 joined the Khalsa Panth.

The Khalsa was the spear-head of defence against the aggressive Moghul forces and hill Rajas. Many battles ware waged resulting in great slaughter but in most of them the Guru

victorious. The Moghul armies surrounded the fort of Anandpur in 1705 and the siege appeared to be prolonged and indecisive. One dark night, the Guru left the fort with some of his followers. The Guru took shelter in the disguise of a *Pir* with his muslim followers; subsequently the Moghul army pursued the Guru near Muktsar. Fortunately forty Sikhs who had first disclaimed the Guru returned to retrieve their honour and died fighting valiantly against the Moghuls. They were known as the Forty Immortals (*Chalis Mukt*).

Guru Gobind Singh had four sons: Ajit Singh, Jujhar Singh, Zorawar Singh and Fateh Singh. All of them had taken Amrit and vowed to resist the oppression of Emperor Aurangzeb. The fortress of Chamkaur (near Ropar) occupied by Guru Gobind Singh and his forty Sikhs was besieged by the Moghul army. The disciples would sally out, one by one, battling their way through the enemy's bayonets. Ajit Singh the eldest son of the Guru, now hardly fifteen, desired to play his part in this struggle. He approached his father or permission to fight with the Moghul army and share the honour of martyrdom with the Sikhs. The Guru blessed him and gave him

a small sword. Ajit Singh's courage and heroism won applause from the enemy. After killing many Moghuls, he tasted the cup of martyrdom. His sacrifice inspired his brother Jujhar Singh, who in turn, sought his father's permission to share the honour of battle. The boy was hardly thirteen. The Guru kissed him, and dressed him like a soldier. He told him to taste the nectar of martyrdom. The young hero then jumped into the thick of battle and rode the way his brother had gone.

After leaving Anandpur Mata Gujri (Guru Gobind Singh's mother) and her two grandsons Fateh Singh and Zorawar Singh were betrayed by their Brahman servant Gangu, and handed over to the Nawab of Sirhind. The grandmother was confined in a solitary cell. The two sons of the Guru, Fateh Singh hardly nine and Zorawar Singh hardly seven, were produced at the Nawab's court. They were offered the usual choice: Islam or death. The little ones boldly asked for death. They had taken Amrit and could never brook any recanting. The Nawab again offered them inducements, money and honours, if they embraced Islam. They rejected his off-repeated offer, knowing fully well that they would be put

to death. The Nawab devised a new torture for these lads. He ordered that the two brothers be bricked alive. The children joyfully faced death. Their grand-mother learnt the tragic end of the two brothers and passed away. When the news of their execution reached the Guru, he stood up and offered a prayer of thanks to the Almighty:

"Today I have discharged the trust committed to my care. The life of my children has been sacrificed for the faith."

The death of Aurangzeb in 1707 meant the cessation of Guru's war-like programme. Emperor Bahadur Shah was apparently friendly to the Guru. The Guru now proceeded to South India. At Nander, he baptised Bairagi Lachmandas and gave him the name of Banda Singh Bahadur. One day a Pathan assassin attacked the Guru. Knowing that his end was near, the Guru ordered the cessation of the line of living Gurus and installed Guru Granth Sahab as the permanent Guru. He passed away at Nander in October, 1708.

15. Guru Gobind Singh's Versatile genius. During his early years, Guru Gobind Singh drank deep at the fountain of ancient Indian scriptures

and developed in the fullest measure the national tradition and the culture of the old Rishis and warriors. He collected around him 52 poets. King Chandragupta had only nine gems, while Guru Gobind Singh had fifty-two. There are two main themes of his poems—the glorification of God and the value of arms in inculcating courage and heroism. The contents of Dasam Granth are as under:

- I. Jaap Sahab: Here Guru Gobind Singh sings of the glory of God in a variety of metres, requiring deft and artistic handling.
- II. Bichtra Natak: In this wonderful drama, a sort of autobiography, Guru Gobind Singh dwelt on his previous life, his mission and his work. God commissioned him to complete the mission of Guru Nanak.
- III. Akal Ustat: Here is the praise of the Timeless One is striking images and telling words. It includes 10 Swayyas of the Sikh's daily prayers.
- IV. Shabad Hazare: These ten verses were written by the Guru in adoration of God.
  - V. Sawaya Tatees: These 33 verses were written by the Guru, with the object of rejecting caste, bigotry and ritual and singing the

- glory of God as the noblest profession of man.
- VI. Zafar-nama: This epistle is written in Persian and is addressed to Aurangzeb. It is not only a vindiction of Truth but also a song of the glory of God who through small ants kills thousands of tyrants.
- VII. Chandi Charitra: It narrates the exploits of Chandi, the goddess, who destroyed many demons. It is a Hindi epic poem, rendered with the object of encouraging the Sikhs to fight tyrants. The second part called Chandi di Var is in Punjabi verse.
- VIII. Gian Parbodh: It is devoted to the praise of God and contains references to Hindu epics and legends.
  - IX. Chaubis Aviar: These verses describe the 24 incarnations of Vishnu.
    - X. Shastra Nam Mala: It is an inventory of weapons and their uses.
  - XI. Hikayat: These 11 tales are composed on the lines of masnavi poetry in Persian.
- XII. Charitropakhyan: It is a group of 404 stories describing the wiles of women. Some say that this is not a work of the Guru but of

one of the poets of his court The idea behind these stories is that man should avoid falling into the traps and wiles of women. It is said that the *Dasam Granth* is not entirely the work of the tenth Guru. It was compiled by Bhai Mani Singh at Amritsar in 1734, twenty six years after the passing away of Guru Gobind Singh. It is said that the first six works listed above were written by the Guru and the last six by some of the poets and *pundits* engaged by him. An authorised and final version of the Dasam Granth is still awaited.

Gobind Singh was a born warrior and a natural leader of men. Singlehanded, he strove to challenge the Moghul armies. He did not have many men or much money; he has just two things—leadership and courage. The early training in arms stood him in good stead. He built a number of forts, at Anandpur, and other places. The Guru invited the hill Rajas to join him against Aurangzeb but they refused. On the contrary, the Rajas made a grand alliance with Bhimchand as their leader, to fight the Guru. In the first engagement at Bhangani (1687), the

hill Raias were routed. This was due to the Muslim reinforcements brought by Budhoo Shah, a devout follower of the Guru. Encouraged by the first victory, the Guru built new forts at Lohgarh, Anandgarh, and Fatehgarh, and began to add to his military equipment and resources. The hill Rajas approached Aurangzeb for help against the Guru and he sent a large force under Miyan Khan. A bloody battle near Nadaun (1688) resulted in the defeat of the Moghul army. Aurangzeb sent prince Muazam to fight the Guru. Nand Lal persuaded the prince to desist from fighting with the Guru and to turn his attention to hill Rajas. The Rajas suffered defeat at the hands of the Moghul army. The Rajas then appealed to Aurangzeb to help them against the Guru. The Guru fought eleven battles after the creation of the Khalsa (1699) with the Mughuls and the Hill-rajahs. The most important was the battle of Anandpur (1705). The Moghul armies surrounded the fort of Anandpur in 1705. The Guru left the fort. The forty sikhs who had earlier disclaimed the Guru died fighting valiantly against the Moghuls. They are remembered for ever in the Sikh Supplication—Ardas.

## CHAPTER II

## POST-GURU PERIOD

- 17. Banda Singh. Banda Singh whose original name was Lachman Bairagi was born in 1670 in a small village in Poonch (Kashmir). At an early date, he renounced the world and became a Sadhu. He settled at Nander in the Hyderabad State. Guru Gobind Singh met him in 1708 and enlisted him in the Khalsa Panth. The Guru gave him a new name, Banda Singh Bahadur. He gave him a sword and five arrows and asked him to respect the following five commandments:
  - 1. Lead a life of Brahmcharya. Do not touch a woman.
  - 2. Speak the Truth.
  - 3. Serve and obey the Khalsa Panth.
  - 4. Do not establish a new sect.
  - 5. Be humble. Let not victory make you haughty and vain.

Having taken the Guru's blessings, Banda, with a band of Sikhs, proceeded to the Panjab, dreaming of revenge against the Nawabs and rulers and who had done wrongs to the Guru and his family. He first attacked Sarhind where

the Nawab had ordered the live-burial of the two young sons of Guru Gobind Singh. Many villages were razed to the ground. The Muslim rulers were overwhilmed by panic and united together to ward off Banda Singh's attacks. Wazir Khan, Governor of Sarhind, assisted by Khawaja Ali of Malerkotla, fought a decisive battle with Banda Singh's forces in May 1710. The Muslims were defeated; Wazir Khan was killed in battle. The Sikhs destroyed Sarhind. Banda Singh appointed Bai Singh as Governor of Sirhind. Subsequently Saharanpur, and Ambheta were occupied by Banda Singh's forces. The Sikhs had the region between Sarhind and Panipat under their control. In a small engagement with the imperial troops at Amirabad, the Sikhs were repulsed. Banda Singh sought refuge in the fort of Lohgarh which was beseiged by the Moghul army. The Sikhs fought bravely but were unfortunately repulsed. Banda escaped under disguise to Nahan. The new emperor Farukhsiyar was a sworn enemy of the Sikhs. He ordered in 1712 that Sikhs wherever found should be put to the sword. Banda was beseiged at Kalanaur and had to surrender in December He was brought in an iron cage to Delhi

to receive his punishment. He was killed most brutally at Delhi on June 6, 1716. Rabindar Nath Tagore's poem on Banda Singh's martyrdom entitled *Bandi Bir* is very stirring and vivid. The last stanza is given below:

"All who watched were struck dumb, Banda's body was torn to pieces, With pincers and burning tongs, Bit by bit, he was scorched and burnt With unshakable courage Banda facad A martyr's death that day, Uttering not a single cry of pain, All who watched stood dumb With horror their sight was numbed."

Banda's achievements were great. Firstly, he punished the Muslim rulers for their crimes against Guru Gobind Singh. He rehabilitated the honour and the glory of the Khalsa. At one time, the region from Lahore to Panipat lay at his feet. So great was the loyalty he inspired that not a single Sikh out of thousands captured and persecuted, recanted. He was regarded as a miracleman. He failed because he disobeyed the Guru's commands. He renounced Brahmacharya and started a new sect. Banda Singh's example clearly shows how an ordinary man cap

work wonders with Guru's blessings.

- 18. Sikh martyrs. Martyrdom means conscious acceptance of suffering for an approved and noble cause. A martyr is full of love for the people and shows great faith and patience in facing suffering. He with his own blood bears testimony to the truth and immortality of his cause. The number of staunch Sikhs who were executed by the Muslim rulers is considerable. The Shahidganj temple of Lahore is a standing monument to the sacrifice of hundreds of Sikhs. A few notable martyrs are mentioned below.
  - (i) Bhai Mati Das was a companion and personal attendant of Guru Tegh Bahadur. He was imprisoned in the Delhi Fort (1675). He was offered the usual choice: Islam or death. His choice was obvious. He was cruelly tortured by being sawn into two pieces. This was done to cow the spirit of Guru Tegh Bahadur, but the Guru preferred martyrdom to the change of faith.
  - (ii) Bhai Mani Singh was a devout Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh. The Guru dictated to him the whole of Guru Granth Sahib at Damdama Sahib. After the Guru's

passing away, he lived at Amritsar and looked after the Harmandar. In 1738, he applied for permission to hold the Diwali fair at the temple. He was permitted to do so on a promise to pay Rs. 5000 at the conclusion of the fair. He invited the Khalsa community to join the fair at Amritsar. Meanwhile, the Governor of Lahore sent toops to Amritsar ostensibly to keep order, but actually to attack the Sikhs. Mani Singh cancelled the fair. He could not therefore pay Rs. 5000/-. He was arrested and asked to pay the amount or to embrace Islam. He refused to recant and was sentenced to death. His body was cut at each joint and thus he became a martyr.

(iii) Bhai Taru Singh was a devout Sikh of Majha region. He was arrested for supplying food and shelter to Sikhs who had been driven into forests. He was charged before the Governor of Lahore and offered the usual option: Islam or death. Bhai Taru Singh declined to change his faith. He was put on the wheel and his limbs were crushed. While half dead,

his skull was cut along with the hair. He died like a true martyr, with the Holy Name on his lips.

- (iv) Shahbaz Singh, a boy of fifteen, refused to accept Islam at the bidding of his Muslim teacher. He and his father were asked to make the usual choice between Islam or death. On their refusal to recant, they were broken on the wheel in 1745.
- 19. Persecution of the Sikhs. After the death of Banda Singh, the Muslim rulers decided to extirpate the Sikhs. They were outlawed and dared not live in any city on pain of death. Rs. 25/- was the reward offered for the head of a Sikh; a few rupees were given for information leading to his arrest. Mobile troops were sent in all directions to comb the country-side and to hunt down the Sikhs. For ten long years, this campaign of extermination continued and thousands of Sikhs were put to the sword. The Sikhs concealed themselves in jungles and out-of-the-way places, attacking villages in the form of guerrilla bands to harass the local tyrants.

In 1726, Ala Singh, the ruler of *Phulkian* missal, defeated a small contingent of troops and looted the passing imperial treasury. Next year,

he defeated Nawab Asad Ali, Nizam of Lahore. One band of guerrilla Sikhs attacked Nadir Shah's treasure at Dera Baba Nanak. Lakhpat Rai, the commander killed many Sikhs for this reason. Mir Mannu, Governor of Lahore, ordered general massacre of Sikhs in the Punjab. The Durrani also killed whatever Sikhs he could catch. The result was that during these 34 years, thousands of Sikhs were either slain or forced to hide themselves in jungles. But they never lost courage or inspiration of the Khalsa.

20. Sikhs capture power. In 1752, Ala Singh, the leader of the Phulkian misal, captured Patiala and built a strong fort there. Kapur Singh founded the Singhpuria missal and carved out a little kingdom for himself. Jassa Singh Kalal of Ahluwalia missal marched on Lahore and became its ruler in 1758. He issued Sikh coinage for the first time. The Marahatas were crushed by Ahmed Shah Abdali at Panipat in 1761, and the Sikhs were now free to enlarge their dominion and treasury. After the return of Durrani to Kabul, Lahore was ruled by Raja Lehna Singh. The Sikhs withdrew temporarily from Lahore during the Pathan invasion of 1767. They once again returned to Lahore. The Panjab was now

a union of 12 Sikh states (missals).\* The missals were ruled by their chiefs with the help of their followers. They treated the Kisans fairly well. The village disputes were tried by the Panchayat. The poor were given food and clothes from temples funds. The Sikh kingdoms were expanding, but unfortunately there was a rivalry among them. One missal wanted preminence over the other. In 1778, Jassa Singh occupied Kapurthala and assumed the title of King. He issued coins in his name. Ranjit Singh a member of the Sukarchakia missal was born in 1780, and his feats of during and courage made him the lion of the Panjab.

The Sikh territory and army had increased beyond recognition, but danger lay in their internecine quarrels. Ranjit Singh occupied the throne of Lahore in 1799, expelling his rival Chet Singh of *Bhangi missal*.

21. Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780-1839). After his enthronement at Lahore, in 1801, Ranjit Singh annexed Amritsar in 1802. He assumed control over the Doaba region. In 1806, he

<sup>\*</sup>The names of the missals were Bhangi, Ahluwalia, Ramgharia, Nakai, Kanhia. Dallewalia, Singhpuria, Karora Singh, Shahid. Nihang. Phulkia and Sukerchakia.

crossed the Sutlej and the Sikhs of Jind appealed to the British for help against Ranjit Singh. The British forced a treaty on Ranjit Singh in 1809, declaring the Sutlej as his frontier. In 1818, Ranjit Singh annexed Multan, and the next year, Kashmir lay at his feet. He annexed Peshawar and Bannu in 1823. The Maharaja allowed the British in 1833 to move their troops to Kabul through his territories. Ranjit Singh died in 1839.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh was a fine flower of Sikh chivalry. He was a born soldier and administrator. Though illiterate, he had a fund of common sense and ruled his empire with justice and sagacity. The highest offices were open to Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus alike.\* He was neither cruel nor vindictive, even though he subjugated a number of rulers and sardars. He was meek and humble at Sikh gathering. For forty years (1799 to 1839), the Panjab enjoyed a spell of peace and prosperity. Ranjit Singh was a strict disciplinarian. He used to go about in disguise to test his officers. One evening he went out in disguise and returned very late. Khushal

<sup>\*</sup>G.S. Mansukhani: The story of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (Hemkunt).

Singh the chowkidar of the palace refused to open the gate. The Maharaja appreciated his sense of duty and discipline and rewarded him.

Maharaja Ranjit Singh had a discerning eye. He could easily pick out men of ability and character. His Prime Minister was Dhyan Singh, but for some time a Muslim named Fakir Aziz-ud-din, held this office. His minister Sawanmal and commander Desa Singh were equally gifted. Ranjit Singh's court was cosmopolitan in character and was full of statesmen, soldiers, scholars and artists. He recruited foreigners to his army and respected men of talent and they all loved him.

Though a born fighter, he was never aggressive. He restored peace and order where confusion prevailed. He prohibited traffic in women and children. He dispensed justice impartially. He was merciful to his enemies. He patronised artists who had made their mark in poetry, painting and music.

Ranjit Singh's achievements may be summed up as under:

- (i) He founded the Sikh state—Darbar Khalsa.
- (ii) He extended his dominions to the N.W. Frontier.

- (iii) He modernised the Sikh army under European officers.
- (iv) His was a secular state. Public offices were open to members of all communities.

The death of Ranjit Singh was a signal for the disintegration of the Sikh Empire. Kharag Singh, his successor, died within a year. Naunihal Singh died soon after. Sher Singh, the next ruler was murdered after 3 years. Dalip Singh the next heir assumed authority in 1843.

In 1844, Mulraj, the Governor of Multan induced the Sikhs to cross the Sutlej. This meant war with the British. The Sikhs were repulsed in the battle at *Mudki* in 1844. Subsequently the Sikh army was defeated at *Aliwal* in 1846. They suffered another reverse at *Sobraon*. The British annexed the Jalandhar Doab and sold Kashmir to Raja Gulab Singh. For administering the remaining portion of the Panjab, a Council of Regency was established.

The British saw their chance when there was trouble at Multan in April 1848. After a drawn battle at Chilianwala in 1849, the British struck a decisive blow against the Sikh army at Gujrat. Lord Dalhousie deposed Raja Dalip Singh and annexed the Panjab in 1849.

22. The Sikh Revival. The annexation of the Panjab in 1849 was followed by a policy of consolidation and reform undertaken by the Lawrence brothers. Education was encouraged, canals were dug and communications were improved. The general condition of the peasants in the Panjab was satisfactory. The rising of 1857 had no effect on the Sikh masses.

The Sikh revival began in the seventies of the last century. Reformist movements like the Namdharis and Nirankaris and Singh Sabha played their part in preventing the merger of Sikhism into Hinduism. A study of Sri Guru Granth Sahib also led to the understanding of the true gospel. Dr. Trumpp, a German scholar, translated one-third of Guru Granth Sahib into English. His rendering was however not liked by the Sikhs. Different Sikh theologians like Prof. Gurmukh Singh, Bhai Kahan Singh, S. Khazan Singh, Bhai Vir Singh and S. Teja Singh made attempts to expound Sikhism both to their co-religionists and outsiders. The Sikh Tract Society issued useful publications. Mr. M.A. Macauliffe rendered a distinct service to the Sikhs by publishing his six volumes entitled The Sikh Religion in 1909.

The Sikhs played a heroic part in the First World War (1914-1918). They also took a leading part in the Non-co-operation movement started by Gandhi in 1919. Their sacrifices and sufferings in the national struggle were appreciated by leaders all over India. Their agitation for maintainance of sanctity of Gurdwaras also bore fruit.

23. Reform of Gurdawaras. The Gurdwara Sudhar movement also known as the Akali movement\* continued for five years (1920-25). Its aim was to liberate the Gurdwaras from the personal and arbitrary control of Mahants and to bring them under public control. The Sikhs had to face lots of hardships and sufferings for improving the administration of their shrines. Prior to this, the Singh Sabha movement had left its impress on the educational and general uplift of the Sikh masses.

The chief factors for the growth of this movement were—the democratic principles of Sikh religion, the extravagance and immorality of priests, the need for removal of untouchability among the Sikhs and the need of using Gurdwara

<sup>\*</sup>The Akali movement is different from the Akali Party led by Master Tara Singh.

funds for educational and social uplift.

The first incident which focussed public attention on Gurdwara Sudhar was the Rakab Gani case in 1914. The Government demolished a part of the outer wall of this Gurdwara, but on account of Sikh agitation, it had to repair it. Moreover, the government imposed restrictions on carrying Kirpan (a religious symbol) in 1916. The treatment of Sikhs overseas fanned the fire of discontent against the Government. Besides, the general condition of Gurdwaras was deplorable. The Mahants used Gurdwara offerings and income for personal purposes. The Sikh press, with one voice, agitated for Gurdwara reform. A bill of Gurdwara Reform introduced in the Panjab Assembly was opposed by the then Government. The Sikh League was founded in 1919 to reform the management of the Golden Temple. It lent its support to the non-cooperation movement. A newspaper called Akali was started in June 1920. The Sikhs demanded that the Golden Temple and the Khalsa College, Amritsar, be handed over to the Sikhs, and government interference be withdrawn. The Government agreed to transfer the management of the Khalsa College to a Sikh managing committee. Gurdwara called Babe-de-Ber in Sialkot

taken under popular control in 1920. The Sikh conference held at Amritsar in November 1920 appointed a committee called "Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee" of 175 members for the management of Gurdwaras.

The Sikhs had to face suffering, torture and death at Nankana Sahib (1921), Panja Sahib, Gura-ka-Bagh and Jaito, at the hands of the British Government. After a good deal of agitation by the Sikhs, the Government had ultimately to accept the Sikh demand. The Panjab Council passed the Sikh Gurdwaras Act on 6th July, 1925. Under its provisions the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee was constituted to manage Gurdwaras.

24. Chief Khalsa Diwan. In order to maintain the prestige, purity and glory of the Sikh faith and to protect the rights of the Sikhs, a movement called Singh Sabha movement was started in the Panjab in 1873. But it was necessary to have a central organisation to coordinate the activities of different local Singh Sabhas. On 30th October 1902, a Diwan was held at Amritsar to establish such a central organisation. It was named Chief Khalsa Diwan. It was registered on 9th July, 1904, under the

Societies Registration Act of 1860. Sir Sundar Singh Majithia, the founder of the Diwan, enlisted the support of Bhai Sahib Bhai Vir Singh, Sardar Harbans Singh of Attari, S. Trilochan Singh and Principal Jodh Singh. This band of the blessed five worked zealously for the uplift of the Sikhs.

The aims and objects of the Diwan are (i) the uplift of Sikhs in the spiritual, social, moral and economic spheres, (ii) propagation of the Gurus' teachings, (iii) removal of illiteracy, (iv) protection of political rights of the Sikhs and redress of their grievances by constitutional means. The constitution of the Dewan is broad-based. It includes heads of the four Takhats, representatives of Sikh States, Sikh gentry, Sikh intelligentia, Singh Sabhas and missionary bodies. Only Amritdhari Sikhs who contribute one percent of their income or Rs. 10/- per annum are enrolled as members. They have to sign a pledge to work for the organisation.

In order to improve the economic condition of the Sikhs, *Diwan* workers started the Panjab and Sind Bank in 1908. S. Trilochan Singh won a position of eminence for this institution in the banking work. The *Diwan* is publishing a magazine entitled *Khalsa Advocate* since 1933.

Even today, the Diwan is very much alive and active. It believes in quiet, solid and unostentatious work. Its annual All-India Educational Conference is extremely popular. It is running the central Khalsa Orphange, Ashram for the Blind, Homeopathic Hospital, Khalsa Dastkari School for girls, Amritsar Khalsa Parcharak Vidayala, Khalsa Hospital, Tarn Taran. Recently it has started a number of Public Schools in different towns in the Panjab. The Diwan has a glorious record of public service to its credit and can easily look forward to a successful and bright future.

25. Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee. The Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee is a statutory body with certain functions regarding the administration of Gurdwaras, educational uplift and propagation of Sikh faith. It controls the Golden Temple, the Langar attached to it, Ramdas Nivas and Guru Ramdas Hospital, Amritsar.

The S.G.P.C. is maintaining and controlling the following educational institutions:

- 1. Bhupindra Khalsa High School, Moga.
- Sri Guru Ramdas Khalsa H/Sec. School, Amritsar.

- 3. Khalsa-College, Matunga, Bombay.
- 4. Guru Nanak Engineering College, Ludhiana.
- 5. Guru Nanak Kanya Pathshala, Amritsar.

The S.G.P.C. is doing a good bit for the propagation of Sikh faith. It has a team of trained missionaries which does parchar not only in the Panjab, but also in U.P. and other places in India. It runs a missionary college called Shahid Sikh Missionary College, Amritsar. It is maintaining special Sikh missions at Aligarh, Burhanpur and Hapur. The S. G. P. C. also awards divinity scholarships to students on the basis of a competitive examination. It encourages the administration of Amrit at important festivals and religious fairs. It also publishes Sikh scriptures and books on Sikh religion, and distributes many tracts and booklets free. It maintains a Reference Library and Museum on Sikh History. It also runs the Guru Ramdas Industrial School which manufactures quality Kirpans for Sikhs.

Undoubtedly, the S.G.P.C. is the central and authoritative organisation of the Sikhs. It has done much useful service in the past and has many more years of Seva before it.

26. The Golden Temple. The city of Amritsar was founded by Guru Ramdas in 1577. He wanted to give the Sikhs a centre of culture and trade. This site has an association with Guru Nanak who halted here on his journey to the east. In 1589, Guru Arjan got the central temple built in the midst of a small artificial lake\*. It is known as Harmandar (The Temple of the Lord). Some call it Darbar Sahab. popularly known as 'The Golden Temple'. The Akal Takht was built in 1609 by Guru Hargobind. The temple is symbolic in as much as it represents the varied aspects of Sikhism. Its four doors imply that the temple is open to persons of different parties. In the centre is Guru Granth Sahib. Kirtan is held without a break for about 20 hours every day. Moreover, the temple has been built by the Sikhs with their manual labour showing their love and devotion for their Gurus.

In 1736, the Muslim Governor of Lahore took possession of the temple to prevent the Sikhs from assembling in the temple. In 1737, Bhai Mani Singh applied for permission to hold

<sup>\*</sup>Mian Mir a contemporary Muslim mystic laid the foundation-stone of the Temple (The missionary, Vol. 11, No. 5, p. 27).

the Diwali festival in the Golden Temple. He was permitted to do so on a promise of payment of Rs. 5000/-. In the meanwhile, a Muslim force was sent to attack the Sikhs. The festival was cancelled, but Bhai Mani Singh had to pay for his life for incurring the displeasure of the Muslim ruler. The holy temple later came into the possession of Chaudry Massa Ranghar of Mandiala who converted it in to a stable and nautchhouse. A Sikh named Mehtab Singh was so much annoyed by this sacrilege that he killed Massa and made good his escape. Lakhpat Rai the commander of Moghul forces occupied Amritsar in 1741.

Durrani marched on Amritsar during the Baisakhi festival on the 10th April 1762 to attack the Sikhs. He damaged the sacred temple considerably. The tank was destroyed and filled with filth. The Sikhs took revenge for the pollution of the temple by attacking the rear of his army soon afterwards.

The present temple and its decorations are entirely the work of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, showing his love for the Sikh faith. He endowed it with treasures and presents. The Golden Temple was placed under popular control in 1920.

27. The Freedom Movement. The lesson taught by Guru Arian Dev, Guru Tegh Bahadur and Guru Gobind Singh, namely that no sacrifice is too great for the uprooting of tyranny and the vindication of truth and freedom, was demonstrated by the part which the Sikhs played in their fight against the British rule. Baba Ram Singh, the leader of the Kuka or Namdhari movement raised the banner of revolt in the Panjab in the seventies of the last century. He was confined in his own village by the orders of the British Government and thereafter deported to Rangoon where he died in 1885. More than 66 of his followers were blown away from the guns under the orders of Mr. Cowan, Deputy Commissioner of Ludhiana. More executions and deportations followed, but the flame of freedom flickered for a while in order to burn all the more brightly in the years to follow.

The Sikhs who had settled in different countries like Canada, U.S.A., Japan, China and Malaya decided to continue the freedom-struggle. In 1913, more than 200 Indians, mostly Sikhs, founded the Ghadar Party in Washington to liberate India by force of arms from the British yoke. At this time occurred the Komagata Maru

incident, which showed the real intentions of British imperialists. Baba Gurdit Singh chartered a Japanese ship named Komagata Maru and sailed with about 300 Indian nationals to Vancouver. The passengers were not allowed to disembark and subjected to many hardships. After two months of privation, the passengers had to return to Calcutta in the same ship. They were not allowed to seek employment in Calcutta. They arranged a procession which was fired upon and more than 21 Sikhs died. Then remaining Sikhs were forcibly hand-cuffed and sent to the Panjab.

The Jallianwala Bagh (1919) tragedy of more than a hundred martyrs is yet another indication of the protest of the Panjab against foreign rule. The Guru-ka-Bagh agitation in 1922 was a non-violent struggle to free the Gurdwaras from the influence of the British rulers. The excesses of the police against non-armed Sikh volunteers were exposed by the press.

The Sikhs had a great share in the Indian National Army raised during the Second World War, to free India. General Mohan Singh organised the Sikh population of Malayasia for this armed insurrection against the British in 1941.

- 28. The Sikhs after Partition. The Partition of India caused a great hardship to the Sikh community. Apart from the loss of life and property which the Sikhs suffered, they had to start almost from scratch in East Panjab. The reorganisation of the states on linguistic basis produced a demand for a Panjabi Suba\*. The agitation was suspended in 1962, on account of the National Emergency caused by the chinese aggression. Sikh politics are in doldrums and without able leadership, they cannot look forward to a bright political future.
- 28A. The New Panjab. The linguistic, truncated state of the Panjab was created on 1st Nov., 1966. Agitation against the common links between Haryana and Panjab state and the declaration of Chandigarh as Union Territory was continued by the Akali Party. Due to the political pressure caused by Sant Fateh Singh's fast on 26th January 1970, Mrs. Gandhi, the Prime Minister, announced an Award on Chandigarh alongwith certain conditions. During the nineteen month Emergency, the Akalis continued the agitation and courted arrest. Election in

<sup>\*</sup>G.S. Mansukhani, stories from Sikh History, Vol. XI (Hemkunt).

March 1977 gave a majority to the Akali party which formed a ministry under Parkash Singh Badal. The Akali party passed the Anandpur Sahib Resolution in 1979 demanding more powers for the State. The Congress (I) won a majority in March 1980 election and formed a ministry under Sardar Darbara Singh. The Akalis have started an agitation again in August 1982 for redress of certain grievances. Extremists have raised the slogan of 'Khalistan'. The Central Government has recently expressed a desire for holding a dialogue with Sikh leaders in connection with their demands and grievances.

28B. Panjab Today. The Panjab village has considerably changed during the last two decades. Due to the affluence brought by the Green Revolution, the bullock has been replaced by the tractor, and the bullock-cart by the trailer. The state has electrified all villages and linked most of them by metalled roads to the near by markets and towns. The purchasing power of the farmer has increased and this has helped the production and sale of consumer goods like bicycles, mopeds, sewing machines and electronic goods. The average farmer now has two meals a day and also money for clothing, recreation

and education of his children. Sir Denzil Ibbetson wrote about the Sikh peasants as follows: "The Sikh Jats in the Panjab are proverbially the finest peasantry in India. Much no doubt is due to the sturdy independece and resoulate industry which charactrise the Jat of our eastern plains whatever his religion. But much is also due to the freedom and boldness which the Sikh has in herited from the treditions of the Khalsa."

History tells us that the Sikh Gurus moulded the character and genius of the people of the Panjab. They rejected caste, superstitions and taboos. They inspired the people with courage, faith and hope. They also taught them social and moral values and to serve the common man. If you go to any Panjab village, you will be received cordially and served with whole some food.

28C. Recent Religious Celebrations. The last two decades have generated a lot of enthusiasm and devotion among the Sikhs both in Panjab and outside, in the celebration of centenaries of their Gurus. Guru Gobind Singh's Tercentenary fell in 1967 which was celebrated throughout India and specially by a newly formed

society called Guru Gobind Singh Foundation. It published books on the life and work of the Tenth Guru. It sponsered and partly financed Guru Nanak College at Madras. It also financed Guru Nanak Public School at Chandigarh and a wrirers' Home called *Vidyasar* at Paunta Sahib (HP). It has recently built Guru Gobind Singh Bhavan at Chandigarh which has a library and a multi-purpose auditorium.

Guru Nanak's Quincentenary fell in 1969 which was celebrated throughout the world. Guru Nanak Foundation was establised in 1965 to organise the celebrations in India. Apart from the publication of books on Guru Nanak, the Foundation got prepared 6 L.P. Records of the Guru's hymns inclassical Ragas. It has recently constructed Guru Nanak Institute for Comparative Religions in Delhi.

The Kendri Singh Sabha Shatabadi Committee established in 1973 propogated the ideas of the Singh Sabha Movement (1873) by publication of books on Sikhism. Recently it has established a Sikh Missionery School at Mehrauli. It proposes to established an Education and Research Centre in Chandigarh.

Guru Gobind Singh Marg. The great pilgramage on wheels began in Anandpur Sahib on 10th April 1973. It covered 640 kilometer route upto Damadama Sahib on 13th April 1973. Guru Tegh Bahadur's martyrdom Centenary (1957) was celebrated through a procession on wheels from 4th December to 13th December 1975 from Anandpur to Delhi and back to Anandpur. The main function was held in Delhi on 8th December 1973 which was addressed by the Prime Minister of India and other leaders.

The 400th Foundation Day of the City of Amritsar was celebrated from 24th October to 29th October 1977. The main function was the mammoth procession from Goindwal to Amritsar on 26th October. The projects of permanent benefit initiated by the S.G.P.C. include the erection of a high Tower at Amritsar to enable the visitors to have a full view of the city of Amritsar and its monuments, the establishment of a Kirtan Academy, a Health Complex called Guru Ram Dass Hospital and Medical College in addition to Panchayat Ghar, Guru Granth Sahib Bhavan and Gurdas Writers' Home at Amritsar.

Guru Amardas's fifth birth-centenary was celebrated by S.G.P.C. from 9th May to 11th May, 1979. The main event was a huge procession from Basarke to Goindwal via Khadur on 10th May. Books were published on the life and work of Guru Amardas and a light-and-sound show was held at Goindwal.

## PART II SIKH CULTURE

## CHAPTER II LITERATURE AND ART

29. Poetry of the Gurus. Great literature combines an analysis of the contemporary situation with its relationship to fundamental and permanent issues. The poetry of Guru Nanak has not only a philosophical depth and wealth of thought, but also an intimate relation to social reform and criticism of prevailing taboos and contemporary institutions. Guru Nanak refers to the political condition of India: 'Sin is the king, Greed the minister. Falsehood the mind-master and Lust the deputy to take counsel with; they sit and confer together. The blind subjects, out of ignorance, pay homage like dead men.' Guru Nanak preached in the language of the masses through verses set to music. He used the prevailing Sant Bhasha of the time, but gave it a homely touch by using images and comparions from everyday life. In the Jap ji, Guru Nanak uses a very telling simile:

Just as a garment soiled by urine
Is washed clean by means of soap,
In the same way the mind polluted by sin
Is purified by meditation on the Name.

Guru Nanak was a keen lover of Nature because it reflected the power of God. His verses on the twelve months called *Baranmah* are not merely lyric descriptions of panoramic beauty, but also represent the moods of a mystic longing for God's vision. The *Arti* is full of gems of scenic beauty:

In the salver of the sky,
Sun and moon are the lamps.
The luminous stars are the pearls.
The warm wind from the mountains wafts
the incense.

The God of air waves the whisk.

The forests of the world offer their wealth of flowers.

And the spheres their music play.

Guru Nanak's magnum opus is the Japji. In philosophical language, he sums up the three stages of Bhagti: Hearing the word, meditating on the word, acting on the word.

The next bulk-contribution to Punjabi poetry was that of Guru Arjan. His poems are melodious, full of longing for the Lord. His major works are Bawan Akhri, Sukhmani and Salok sanskriti. The most popular is Sukhmani which contains the basic concepts of Sikhism in simple poetry. Here are ideas about of God, saintliness and meditation. The poems of Guru Gobind Singh are full of vigour and martial spirit. His aim was to inspire the people so that they may face the challenge of emperor Aurangzeb. The doctrine of Right is Might is amply illustrated by his poem on the Sword.

Sword that smiteth in a flash. That scatters the armies of the wicked. In the great battlefield. O thou, symbol of the barve!

30. Poetry of the Post-Guru Period. In the eighteenth century, Waras Shah started the tradition of romantic poetry with his Heer Ranjha. He dramatised the events in moving scenes. Budh Singh tried new forms like Kabit and Kafi. Hasham was the poet of love and he presented the love-stories of Sassi-Punnu and Shirin Farhad as instances of true love. Shah Muhmmad acquired renown for his Jangnama.

In the twentieth century, Bhai Vir Singh dominated the literary scene. His poetry is devotional and inspirational.

Delay not now, My Lord. Yes, come you will, On this hope have I spun The thread of my life.

He is an admirer of nature because it is a manifestation of God's power and furnishes moral lessons for humanity.

Amrita Pritam's lyrical power is seen at its best in her poems on love and the fateful partition of 1947. She is a poetess of freedom, of unorthodox views and forms. In her songs, there is a alonging for freedom and quality of experience marked by an equally forceful expression.

31. Panjabi Prose. The development of Panjabi Prose is of recent origin. Bhai Vir Singh (1872-1957) is our great novelist. His novels—Sundri, Satwant Kaur and Bijai Singh show the kindling of the heroic spirit in a time of stress and strain. His novels have a philosophic and missionary purpose. Nanak Singh is a prolific novelist who has dealt with the problems of the

day. Col. Narinderpal Singh has however broken new ground with a series of historical novels.

The Panjabi short story which is directly the result of western education and modern industrialisation has dealt with problems of our time, both in a realistic and imaginative manner. Kartar Singh Duggal, Kulwant Singh Virk and Sant Singh Sekhon have not only enriched form and craftsmanship, but have also captured the humour and pathos of daily life.

32. Panjabi Drama. Living drama must have its roots in the soil. It cannot be an exotic plant watered by alien mythological tales and legends. Panjabi Drama began with I.C. Nanda who found his stories and characters in his own surroundings. He wanted to expose the social evils of the time and thereby assumed the reformer's role. Gargi (another great name) brought technique to the Panjabi stage. themes and dialogues are extremely modern. Experiments in new genres are not wanting. Sheila Bhatia's Panjabi opera—Heer Ranjha and Prithvirai Chauhan—achieved a measure of success on the Delhi Stage. Recently the Sikh Theatre movement staged some plays based on Sikh history in the capital of India.

33. Folk music and Dance. The Panjabi folk songs are generally sung on the Dholak (drum) according to the requirements of the occasion. The Lori is a sort of lullaby; the Ghori is a wedding-song. Some of the popular songs are based on the theme of love—the love of Ranjha for Heer or that of Punnun for Sassi. Besides Boli and Tappas are quite popular.

The most popular dance which has penetrated into the film-world is the *Bhangra*. It is a song of joy sung at the harvest time. Two or three men are encircled by the dancer and the tempo of the dance is regulated by the beat of the drum. Now-a-days *Bhangra* is performed at marriage parties and occasions of rejoicing.

The Gida is very much like the Bhangra, but it is performed by females. Dancing is followed by singing at regular intervals. The time is kept by clapping. The Panjabi dances are marked by forceful singing and vigorous foot-work.

34. Sikh Painting. The Sikh School of Painting originated in the period of Maharaja Ranjit Singh. The Maharaja was not a painter but he patronised artists who introduced novel values in the realization of the beautiful. The Sikh School contributed rich contours and colours

to religious monuments and public buildings of the time. The highest achievement of the Sikh School was however the decoration and panelling of the Golden Temple at Amritsar. This might he regarded both as an art and as a unique devotional offering to the Guru.

S. Kehar Singh, a painter of the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh may be called the founder of the Sikh school of painting. His 40 water colour miniatures, mainly of the court and courtiers of Ranjit Singh and the Bhagats of the 13th and 14th centuries are indeed remarkable pieces. Some of his paintings are exhibited in the Central Sikh Museum, Amritsar. This artgallery contains many oil paintings depicting various events of and scenes from Sikh history.

Bhai Kishen Singh and Bhai Bishen Singh, the nephews of S. Kehar Singh were good artists in fresco-painting. Some of their pieces are found in the Sikh Museum.

One of the remarkable painters was Amrita Shergill (1913-41) who died rather early. Her work shows the influence of Rajput and Pahari schools. Some of her paintings may be seen in the National gallery of Art, New Delhi.

Among the contemporary Sikh painters, Sardar S. G. Thakur Singh stands out foremost. His portraits of Maharaja Ranjit Singh, General Hari Singh Nalwa, General Sham Singh Attari who died in the First Sikh war at Sobraon in 1846 are indeed remarkable. Sardar Sobha Singh has also good work to his credit. His paintings of Hazrat Mian Mir, Bhai Gurdas and Prince Dalip Singh have been highly commended.

Giani Gian Singh Nagash who served the Golden Temple in various capacities for over 30 years did good many fresco-paintings on the inner walls and arches of the Temple. S. G. Thakur Singh remarks, 'The frescoes executed on the temple-walls are of a nature very different from those of Ajanta, Ellora and Bagh Caves. From the point of view of technique, those frescoes herald altogether a new era in this particular branch of painting'. His works in human, religious, floral and zoological motifs can be seen on the roof and corridors of the temple. The technique of fresco painting known as Mohra Qashi is both detailed and lasting. The interior decorations of the Golden Temple in the floral designs are either painted in tempera or embossed in metal. The skilful harmony of brass

and gilded copper, the minor pieces and precious stones embedded in the walls are crafts in which the Sikh workmen excel. Some of his paintings have been published in an album by his son Sohan Singh.\*

- S. Kirpal Singh has done over 30 big size oil paintings dealing with the persecution of the Sikhs by the Moghul government in the 18th century. Some of his good paintings are those of Bhai Matidas, Bhai Mani Singh, Bhai Taru Singh and the victory of Multan by Sikh forces in 1816. He has also dealt with events connected with Gurdwara reform, like the tragedies of Nankana Sahab, Guru-ka-Bagh and Jaito.
- 35. Sikh architecture. Just as Sikhism derives some of its philosophical elements from Hinduism and Islam, in the same way the Sikh school of architecture combines some of the best features of Hindu and Muslim art. The architecture of the Golden Temple is an outstanding specimen of Sikh architecture. It is a new kind of temple architecture. Percy Brown observes in this connection, "The architectural style adopted by the Sikhs, which is, inappearance, of Moghul extraction, as the result of adaptations

<sup>\*</sup>Gian chitrawali (album of paintings), Amritsar, 1956.

combined with elaborations, presents a certain character of its own, not however, difficult to identify. Among its typical features are the multiplicity of chattries or Kiosks which ornament the parapets, angles and every prominence and projection, the invariable use of the fluted dome, generally covered with copper gilded with gold or brass, the frequent introduction of oriel or embowed windows with shallow elliptical cornices supported on brackets and the enrichment of all arches by means of numerous foliations. From this, it will be seen that details of a somewhat florid order dominate the style, but although few of the structures of the Sikhs aspire to any special arthitectural significance, no one can fail to be attracted by their animated and picturesque appearance." Buildings of this kind are to be found in many towns of the Panjab, but the principal example is the celebrated Golden Temple at Amritsar. The Four Thakhts—Akal Thakht, Anandpur Sahab, Patna Sahab and Hazur Sahab—show the richness and versatility of the temple architecture of the Sikhs.

36. Sikh Kirtan. Devotional singing is a part of the Indian tradition. The Gurus set their verses to music. The musical score was so

chosen as to harmonise with the content and spirit of the song. The chief characteristics of Sikh Kirtan are that each Raga is intended to produce a particular devotional mood or emotion; it is sung at particular time of the day or night or is suited to some season. It expresses the culture and tradition of the Sikh community. It has certain peculiarities and variations; it is capable of being combined with or modified by another Raga. 31 Ragas have been included in Guru Granth Sahib.

The choice of Raga depends on the contents, the emotions, the atmosphere, the phraseology and the metre. Some Ragas can go with a tender imagery and silken words, while others require a harsh and almost martial vocabulary and rhythm.

The Sikh Gurus tried to harmonise the contents of poetry with the characteristics of the Raga. Guru Nanak diluted the exuberance of *Hindol* by combining it with *Basant* so as to give it a certain dignity and seriousness. The Gurus used the Ragas which were popular among the Muslims and Hindus\*, so as to bring the two

<sup>\*</sup>Asa, Suhi and Tilang were the favourite Ragas of the Muslims, while the Hindus loved Sri Rag, Gauri, Sarang and Malar.

communities closer to each other. They also used Ramkali which was the favourite of the Yogis. Manjh was a typical Panjabi score, while Gujri was loved by the Gujar community.

Sri Rag is said to be popular among the saints and *Rishis* because it has peculiarly tender characteristics. As such it is eminently suited to the expression of the longing of the lover for his beloved, the love of the pilgrim—soul for the Universal Soul.

Come sisters, let us embrace as friends.

Let us relate the stories of our Omnipotent

Lord.

Kirtan or Gurmat Sangeet falls into two categories—Hindustani classical music and folk music. The classical ragas were tailored to suit the requirements of devotional and saved music. Folk music includes Vars in the ballad form which enshrine the praises of God.

Guru Nanak advised hymn-singing at daun, because in that period of silence the mind is receptive to the soft and inspiring strains of music and the devotional mood helps the absorption of the healing power of Nam. Kirtan is the food of the soul and one who sings or hiters

to it gets spiritual bliss. His troubles and mischief cease to upset him, his mind gains peace, stability and joy.

Guru Nanak and his successors employed professional singers—Kirtaniyas to perform Kirtan in the congregation both in the morning and the evening. Guru Arjan encouraged the sangat—the congregation—to sing in chorus, because this divine food is needed by every one. It links up the individuals consciousness to the Supreme Reality. The Gurus called it shabad-surat-da-mel. It is the easiest and best medium for gaining Divine consciousness. It his dark age—Kalyug it is an important medium for getting mental peace and spiritual inspiration.

The gearing up of emotional surge of music to spiritual uplift was the notable contribution of the Gurus to the Indian Raga. Moreover, the power of music to soften the inner self to the mould of Bhagti was realised in full measure. Devotional music would not have reached its highest water-mark, but for the songs of the holy Granth\*.

<sup>\*</sup>G S. Mansukhani: Indian Classical Music and Sikh Kirtan.

36-A. Progress after Independence. The setting up of three Academies—Sangeet Natak Academy, Lalit Kala Academy and Sahitya Academy—by the state Government has given some impetus to the fine arts. Annual dramatic competitions of dance and music promot new talent. Awards are given to writers and journalists by the Panjab Government.

The traditional minor arts like *Phulkari*, *Rumala* and *Dari* are languishing for want of petronage. Similarly artistic products and handicrafts in metal, wood, ivory and cloth are in a state of decay and may soon find a niche in museums.

## PART III SIKH PHILOSOPHY

## CHAPTER IV COSMOLOGY

37. The Creator. All religions are generally agreed on the existence of the Creator of the universe. But their concepts of the Creator differ in each case. To the Christians, God is revealed as Trinity: God, His son Jesus, and the Holy Ghost. Hindus accept the theory that God appears in the form of Avtar. Lord Krishna is regarded as the incarnation of God. Islam believes in one God who gave his message to Mohammed, the last prophet. The Gurus emphasise the unity of the Supreme Being. He is the Maker sustainer and the Destroyer of all. From Him emanated sea and land, the earth and the sky. This is "His sport in which he takes delight." When God was alone, He was Nirgun (formless); when He manifested Himself through His creation, He became Sargun (manifest). No one has created God. He is self-existent and self-created and self-luminous.

Some philosophers have tried to prove the existence of God by reason or analogy. The

Guru never felt the need of proving His existence. He assumes God as existent, not in theory but as an actuality. The existence of God requires no proof: He is visible and manifest: "Nanak's God is most visible." He is a self-evident and obvious reality. His existence is axiomatic—"To which-ever side I turn my eyes, I see Him." But the Guru's perception of God was psychic and not physical. He saw Him in a mystic vision. Guru Nanak says, "The eyes that see God are different from physical eyes." In fact, God is a reality which can be better experienced than proved.\* Otherwise how can the phenomenon of the universe be explained? There is a Builder, a Maker, one who has created the moon, the stars, the flowers, the birds and the beasts. He is an Artist-creator.

Even theoretically, God's assumption is essential for the merger of the individual soul into the Universal soul. God is an epitome of all virtue. One must be God—like to deserve

<sup>\*</sup>Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: The reality of the Supreme is not a question to be solved by a dialectic, which without personal experience can not give us conviction. Only spiritual experience can provide us with proofs of the existence of the spirit. (Bhagvadgita, Allen & Unwin, 1960, p. 20).

Him. All these points lead us to believe in the fundamental existence of the Creator. Even modern thinkers and scientists who proceed according to the laws of experiment, observation and verification have come to realise that there is some power or the 'moving hand' which designs and controls the phenomenon of nature. Even athiests believe in some power, which governs the universe—call it Providence, Nature, Intelligence or what you will. These are other names for God. Many philosophers and prophets believe in some sort of God. All things come from God and return to Him. "From One the many emanate, and finally merge into the One." Guru Gobind Singh says in this connection:

"As sparks flying out of a flame
Fall back in the fire from which they rise,
As waves beating on the shingle
Go back and in the ocean mingle,
So from God come all things under the sun
And to God return when their race is run."

- 38. Attributes of God. It is impossible to enumerate the attributes of God, but here are some of them.
  - (i) He is the creator of all things—Karta Purkh.

- (ii) He is self-created and self-existent-Saibhau.
- (iii) He is not subject to birth or death—Ajoni, Akal.
- (iv) He is the source and goal of all. He is the sole cause, the cause of all cases. There can be no spark without fire, no soul without God, no soul without the Universal soul. He is possible without creation. though creation is not possible without Him. God is the source of good as well as evil. The evil and the good are created by Him so that man may choose good and reject evil. But He Himself in His Essence is nothing but good and pure. In Sikhism, there is no such thing as the Devil or Satan, as in other systems of theology. Guru Arjan says, "There is no principle of evil in the universe, because God is All-Good, and nothing that proceeds from All-Good can he really evil." (Sukhmani)
- (v) He is the only Actor—"Himself the Actor, He makes others act." This play (Jagattamasha) is all His fun. He is the slayer, the slain, and the act of slaughter. He is the writer, the pen, the book, the reader,

the plot and the hero of the story. All beings dance at His will. He is the producer, the prompter, the actor and the spectator of the game of life.\* God is autonomous and sovereign. He does not consult anyone. He acts independently.

- (vi) God is All-pervading. He is immanent; everywhere is God outspread. Guru Nanak says, "All is God, all is God! There is nothing but God." Shaikh Farid says, "The Creator dwells in the creation and creation exists in the Lord."
- (vii) God is Infinite. He only can know Himself. No saint or prophet can measure or describe His greatness. Guru Nanak says, "Only one who is as great as God, can size Him up."\*\* There being none such, it is impossible to know His expanse and glory. His greatness is beyond measure. The extent of His excellence cannot be grasped or uttered. The feeble and faltering words of man cannot so

<sup>\*</sup>Guru Gobind Singh says,

<sup>&</sup>quot;People see His different aspects
But do not see the underlying unity."
\*\*Japji, Pauri 24.

much as describe an iota of His glory. Even the man of God is dazzled by His greatness and expresses his inability to measure Him. Just as the boy's kite cannot reach the limit of the sky, in the same way the pilgrim's mind cannot fathom His glory.

- (viii) God is All-knowing. He sees and understands all, because He is everywhere, within and without.\* He knows the secret sins of man, but all the same, does not in anger withhold food or money from the sinner. He is Omniscient who knows everything in advance and fathoms the innermost secrets and still maintains an impartial and detached attitude.
  - (ix) He is True—Sat. He is and ever shall be. He alone will outlive time and eternity. He is real and everlasting. The entire world, though it appears real, is in fact false, because it is transient and ephemeral.

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth: O crooked heart! Thy Master is watching your deeds.

Whatever you do, He beholds
And nothing is concealed from Him.

(Rag Sorath)

To depend on men or worldly things is foolish because the eternal, the real alone is the source of permanent security and happiness. He is the only Truth in a dreamful and shortlived universe.

(x) God is All-giver. God bestows His gifts on any one He pleases. Even punishment or misery which comes from Him is blessed. Men of God consider the apparently adverse things as pleasing and sweet because they come from Him. God distributes His gifts, His bounty without looking into men's worth, otherwise how should villains thrive. Villains are necessary in His drama and as such they receive the measure of His bounty.

But how can misery and evil be regarded as blessings in disguise? God's devotees know that God is All-merciful. He plies the surgeon's knife in order to remove the abscess of sin which otherwise affects man's spiritual health. God's love is boundless and he feels concerned about the suffering of the world. He is kind like a mother, but at times, He rebukes us like a mother, without any grain of spite or ill-will. God

is Father, Husband, and Judge. The Sikh cannot afford to disregard Him or take Him for granted. Guru Arjan says, "The Lord is forgiving. He is merciful to the humble, and kind to His devotees."

(xi) God is All-adorable. All the created things offer their homage and worship to Him. Guru Nanak in the Arti mentions that the sky, the sun, the moon, the stars, the wind, and the flowers sing the praises of the Creator. Tagore's translation of a few lines of the Arti is given below:

In the disc of the sky
The sun and the moon shine as lamps,
The galaxy of stars twinkle like pearls
All Zephyr is incense, the winds are fanning,
All the woods are bright with flowers.
Oh Saviour of the world!
Thine Arti (adoration) is wonderful indeed!

Nature is His Temple. God is everywhere and how can man separate from Him in order to worship Him as one outside himself. God is the Adorer and God is the Adored, and God is the act of adoration, all in Himself.

- (xii) God is just. God does not take sides. In His eyes, all are equal. He treats master and servant alike—"There in His court, true justice prevails. Without hearing a word from anyone, He knows the truth." God is not subject to discrimination—Nirvair. If we cannot get justice at God's hands, where else can we?
- (xiii) God is Love. God is present here and everywhere in the form of Love. Moreover without love, none can see God. Guru Gobind Singh says, "Hear the ultimate truth: those alone who love Him shall find Him."\*
- (xiv) God is omnipotent. He is All-powerful. He has the power of dissolving the universe. He is not subject to the law of Karma.
- 39. Names of God. Truly speaking, God has no name. He may be called Anam or the Nameless, The best word that suits God is Satnam the eternal and absolute Truth. Broadly speaking, the names used for God in the scriptures are either historical or attributive. Indeed all names are derivative or functional. In Hindu scriptures,

<sup>\*</sup>Swayyas, No. 9.

God is called according to the names of incarnations (Avtars). The Gurus used all such incarnatory names of the One Supreme Being. Bhagwan, Brahm, Gopal, Gobind, Hari, Krishan, Mukand, Madho, Murari, Narayan, Narhar, Parmeshwar Dev, Vasudev, stand for God. So also the Muslim names like Allah, Haq, Kabir, Karim, Khuda, Rab, Rahim, Raziq stand for the Supreme Being.

The Gurus did not believe in the incarnation of God in a human form. Guru Nanak says, "A hundred thousands of Mohemeds, and million of Brahmas, Vishnus and a hundred Ramas stand at the gate of the Most High. They all perish, God alone is immortal." Guru Nanak therefore forbade the worship of the so-called incarnations of God like Rama and Krishna as also the idols of gods and goddesses. The Gurus have however given some new names to God, as for instance, Mittar, Pritam, Sajjan, Yar, Kharagketu, Sarbaloh, Mahakal.\* In the Sikh scripture, it is shown that God does not belong to any favoured religion. He is non-sectarian and holds the balance evenly between conflicting faiths.

<sup>\*</sup>Narain Singh: Paradoxical as it may seem, the Formless is realised through forms, and the Nameless through the Names. (Our Heritage, p. 121).

God does not have any label or religion. Fredric Pincot says, For Nanak, There was no such thing as 'God for the Hindus, a God for the Muhammadans, and a god or gods for the outer heathen; for him There was one God', not in the likeness of man, like Rama, not a creature of attributes and passions, like the Allah of Muhammad, but one sole, indivisible self-existent, incomprehensible, time-less, all-pervading—to be named, but otherwise indescribable and altogether lovely."\*

Sikh Gurus emphasised Wahguru as the synonym of God. The four letters stand for four names of God, Waya for Wasudeva, Haha for Hari, Gaga for Gobind and Rara for Ram. So this word is an epitome of four names of God. According to some theologians, Wahguru is an expression of the feeling of wonder when we contemplate His creation. It is a term for ecstasy—Wismad—which means "How wonderful is the Lord!" This word is satisfactory because it sums up both an emotional and aesthetic experience of God's manifestation. Bhai Gurdas says, "Wahguru is the mantra of the Guru; by repeating it the filth of ego disappears."

<sup>\*</sup>Fredric Pincot: The Religious systems of the World.

40. God's immanence. Theologians have argued for and against the transcendence of God. Is God pervasive in the universe or does He stand above it? Some argue that God cannot be immanent in an evil person, just as He cannot be transcendent over a true devotee. The Guru reconciled the two apparently contradictory notions.\* God is both in and above the creation. Both the aspects exist simultaneously. If God as Sargun disappears, He continues as Nirgun. The Sargun can appear as cosmos or ejects of Nature. He is present in all things, but all things do not exhaust the limitless God. God transcends the universe, though He also pervades it. God is in the world and yet Pastands above it too.\*\* The world cannot limit the whole of God. When we talk of the immanence of God

<sup>\*</sup>Teja Singh: The Gurus have combined the Aryan idea of immanence with the semitic idea of transcendence, without taking away anything from the unity and the personal character of God. (Sikhism, p. 3)

<sup>\*\*</sup>Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: God is both transcendent dwelling in light inacessible and yet more intimate to the soul than the soul itself. The Upnashad speaks of two birds perched on one tree, one of whom eats the fruits and the other eats not but watches, the silent witness, withdrawn from enjoyment. Impersonality and personality are the two ways of looking at the Eternal. (The Bhagvadgita, p. 24).

in the universe, we think of Him as Sargun (qualityful); when we talk of His transcendence, we think of Him as Nirgun (qualityless). If we do not take into account the transcendental aspect of God, the devotee will only worship himself and none above him. He is the source of all light and the object of all worship. God's transcendence is expressed in different words—God is Dur (far), a Baikunth Ka Wasi (Dweller of Heaven), the Jagan Nath (Lord of Universe). It is in His transcendental form that God rules the universe, issues orders (Hukam) and guides by His Will.\* It must however be remembered that the immanence of God is equally important because otherwise we neither enjoy His presence within us nor the bliss of His realisation—"God in whom we live and move and have our being."

Really speaking, God is the whole, and the world, a part of that whole. As Dr. Sher Singh

<sup>\*</sup>Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: The Supreme is atonce the transcendental, the cosmic and the individual unity. In its dynamic cosmic aspect, it not only supports but governs the whole cosmic action, and this very self which is one in all and above all is present in the individual. The Christians regard the Supreme in its transcendental, cosmic and individual aspects, as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost respectively. (The Bhagvadgita, p. 24).

says: "God is infinite, indefinite and unlimited zero—Nirgun. Zero or a point becomes one—Sargun, finite and limited. One is in the zero, but only very partially."\*

The Gurus regarded God both as transcendent and immanent. God is the Creator and God is the created. He is Karta (Creator) and Bhugta (Enjoyer): "He Himself is the fisherman and the fish. He himself is the water and the net." Just as the lotus grows in water and yet keeps its stem and flower above the water-level, in the same way God is within and without His creation. He has created evil persons and yet He is spotless (Nirlep). Guru Arjan says, "He is both Nirgun and Sargun" (qualityless and qualityful).\*\* What a beautiful synthesis of the manifold qualities of God! According to Hindu Scriptures, God is three-fold: Brahma, the creator, Vishnu the sustainer and Shiva the destroyer. Symbolically, He is Sat-Chit-Anand, that is Eternal, Righteousness, consciousness and Bliss.

41. Knowledge of God. It appears difficult for a child to know all about his father. In the same way, it is hard for a devotee to know the

<sup>\*</sup>Dr. Sher Singh: Philosophy of Sikhism, p. 147.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Adi Granth: Sukhmani.

Creator. Guru Nanak confesses his inability to describe God. That God cannot be known fully is admitted by many prophets. Guru Gobind Singh says, "It is impossible to know Him fully. We can only have some glimpse of Him from His work." Human eyes can only see the outward forms; the Universal, since it has no form cannot be seen, but it can be perceived by the eye of the spirit. As the mystic poet Bulleh Shah puts it:

Of course I lack the eye that sees

That is why I am separated from the Lord. Does it man that it is impossible to know Him? According to the Guru, we can know Him only with His Grace. He cannot be understood through reason. But He can be known intuitively. It is the consciousness of truth by an inner process (Anubhav). But this does not mean that reason must be banished. Discriminating intelligence (Bibek-Budhi) is essential, though the seed must first be shown by faith. Knowledge through reason and conviction is useful to the devotee. Betrand Russell writes, "Intuition is what first leads to the beliefs which subsequent reason confirms or confutes." It is by a mutual cooperation of the two that divine knowledge is obtained.

42. Aspects of God. The basic creed of Sikhism is the Mul Mantra: "There is but one God. His name is true and everlasting. He is the Creator, Fearless and without enemity, the Timeless Form, Unborn and Self-existing, known through His Grace, True in the beginning, True since time commenced, True even now and will ever be True."\*

All the important aspects of Divinity are summed up in the above verse. The Guru rejected the theory of incarnation. God does not take birth. He only sends messengers as prophets to show the right path to the people. He has no special relationship with any one. He is the father of all created beings; all are His children, sharing equally His gifts. He is self-existing; He has no peer or equal. He is not subject to time. He existed even before time; He is eternal. He will not come to an end, even though the universe may dissolve. The Creator can be known and realised through the grace of a spiritual guide. But such a guide must be perfect, above worldly error and sin.

<sup>\*</sup>Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: His real form is invisible, unsmellable, untouchable, quality-less, devoid of parts, unborn, eternal, permanent and actionless.

<sup>(</sup>The Bhagvadgita, p. 22)

Sikhism believes also in a personal God. The devotee is like a bride yearning for union with the husband—the Creator. Guru Nanak describes God thus: 'He is sweet like ripe dates, like a rivulet of honey.' Elsewhere the Guru describes Him in sensuous terms: 'Of beauteous eyes and sparkling teeth, of sharp nose and luxurious hair, of golden body, of alluring pose and peacock's gait, eternally young and whose speech is ever sweet.'

43. Creation of the universe. God existed in the Nirgun (qualityless) form before He created the Universe. Then it was all dark. Guru Nanak says, "In the beginning there was unspeakable darkness:

There was no earth or heaven, nothing but God's solitary being:

There was no Brahma, Vishnu or Shiva: None existed but only God."\*

This may be called the stage of pre-creation, when God was alone in a form of meditation. Then the world was created by the Divine will: "Thou createst all thy universes truly to please thyself, to enjoy the spectacle, the reality,

<sup>\*</sup>A.G., p.

which is the light of thy own Reality-self." "By His order all forms came into existence."

How and when the world was created is uptil now a mystery. Guru Nanak confesses his inability to fathom this secret. The Absolute created, earth and humanity and without any support maintains them. From the Absolute are radiated the sun and the moon. The light of the Absolute pervades the three worlds. The Absolute is limitless and indescribable. this process of creation a sudden and impulsive one or was it one of evolution and growth? Only God who manifested the Divine will knows it. Dr. Sher Singh mentions two stages - Abhur God (transcendental) and Saphur God (manifest). Hukam\* takes the form of Natural Laws or Universal axioms. Like the spider, God has spun Himself into a web. A time will come when He will destroy that web, and once again become His sole self. The world is real, so far as it is a manifestation of the Supreme Being; it is false or illusory because it is subject to change and decay. God is only eternal (Sat), all else is temporary (Asat). The whole universe is a sport or game of the Almighty.

<sup>\*</sup>Hukam or the Divine will is responsible for the creation, sustenance and dissolution of man and the universe.

- 44. Scope of the universe. It is impossible to enumerate the number of worlds and regions created by God. Guru Nanak says in Japji, "Infinite is the number of the lower regions and infinite the number of heavens. The scholars have taxed their brains to the utmost to discover the limits of His creation but have invariably failed in their attempts." The Muslims believe in the seven heavens, but Guru Nanak practically demonstrated to the Fakir of Bhagdad (as reported by Bhai Gurdas in his Vars) that the number of regions is infinite. Guru Nanak says, "Only one, who is as great as He, can know His powers."\*
- 45. God and His creation. God is mentioned both as Nirgun (formless) and Sargun (formful). In the beginning he was Nirgun, but when he thought of creating the universe, he became Sargun through His creatures. God pervades Nature and other phenomena where He has His seat. He is here, there and everywhere, and in all directions in the form of Love. God is not separate from his creation. He lives in everything and in every heart. He loves to see his creation. Everything is strung in the rosary of His order.

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth, p. 5.

The creator pervades the Universe and the Universe is a part of the Supreme Being. The supreme is perfect, but his creation concrete and actual—is not equally perfect.

The world is the house of God, and uplift of man depends and his fall is due to his upon his realising the presence of God in His works, regarding the world as everything and God as nothing.

46. Governance of the universe. It is not possible to fathom the mysteries of God's government. The world is a play of the Infinite on the finite. All that we can safely say is that the entire creation is sustained by His law and carries out His orders. In Japji, Guru Nanak says,

"By His order, all forms came into existence, By His order, all setient creatures sprang into life.

He distributes rewards to some, while others, He diverts to the cycle of birth and death,

All things are under His control, nothing is outside His dominion.

If His Laws were rightly understood, none would indulge in self-conceit."

So it is the duty of individuals to study the

laws of the universe, because by understanding them, we shall realise the greatness and glory of the Supreme Being. Then we shall not be so presumptuous as to give our own suggestions to the Almighty to do this or do that. In His supreme wisdom, we shall conceal our folly and pray for a gleam of His Light.

47. Creation of man. The creation of man could not have been purpose-less. God created man with some object in view.\* He made man so that he may learn to appreciate Him and ultimately become one with Him. God made man in His own image. He put His own divine spark in man which is called the soul.

The soul-Jiva-is a part of God. It is deathless like Him. Before creation, it lives with God, and according to His will, it takes bodily forms. After the death of the physical self, the soul survives. Guru Arjan says:

The soul neither dies Nor can it be destroyed.

<sup>\*</sup>S. Radhakrishnan: God's purpose for the world or cosmic destiny for man is the realisation of the immortal aspirations through his mortal frame, the achievement of divine life in and through this physical frame and intellectual consciousness.

(Bhagvadgita, p. 43)

The soul is real, eternal, endowed with intelligence and self-consciousness and remains unchanged through the process of birth and death. The body is called the wife of the soul. The wife tells her husband to live with her for ever but the husband has to follow the will of God. The soul vitalises the body which is a machine of the sense-organs. The soul has to take forms according to the individual's actions. This is the doctrine of the transmigration of souls or metempsychosis. The wall of selfishness-the ego-separates the soul from God. The cycle of birth and death can be ended by meditation and divine grace:

Through His service, the transmigration
Of souls can come to an end. (Sukhmani)

The soul is capable of progress and earning union with the Supreme Being. God did not make man for sport or for trying various experiments or instruments on him. He designed him for happiness and love. And in His infinite wisdom, He provided his mother with milk for him. He dried up mother's milk as soon as the child got teeth to eat food. God gave man the best start in life by providing him all the requisites which he generally needs for his up-keep. Just

as the body is sustained by food and drink, in the same way the soul is nourished by virtue and meditation on the Holy Name. When the soul progresses by performance of good deeds and constant rememberance of God, it becomes pure enough to merit union with Him.\*

Gnru Arjan says:

Now that you have got the human body, Here is an opportunity for meeting God. All other actions will be quite futile; Remember the Name in the company of saints, Exert yourseif to cross the ocean of life, Life goes waste in the intoxication of Maya.\*\*

48. Position of man. Man is the focal centre of the universe. We must understand the nature and pupose of man's life in the universe. Man's goal is the integration of his personality, the realisation of a divine existence in which the spiritual principle dominates the body and the soul. Man takes birth according to the will of

<sup>\*</sup>Kapur Singh: Sikhism uiges man to divinise the whole of humanity on this earth by transforming mind, life and matter, through a conscious effort and will, and with the aid of the spiritual technique of the Namyoga (Guru Granth Sahab, ed. Gopal Singh, II, p. VIII).

<sup>\*\*</sup>Adi Granth, p. 12.

God, as a result of the actions of his past life. Man is the crown of all sentient life, what the Guru calls "the final stage". Human life is not a fetter, and can become an instrument of spiritual attainment.\* If man progresses, he enters Sachkhand, and if he regresses, he enters the circle of birth and death. The goal of man is liberation from repeated births, and merging into the Divine Being.

Life is like a game of chess. The individual does not frame rules or control the play. The cards are dealt out to him; it is up to him to play the game well or play it badly. God is watching him and feels keenly interested in man's effort to do his best.

Man is made of two things, spirit and matter. The spirit or soul is subtle in essence, while the body is gross. The soul is the main-stay of the body. The body must be maintained and kept healthy because it houses the soul, which is a part of divinity. God and the individual soul are

<sup>\*</sup>Guru Arjan says, "The human body is the resting point of the process of creation and it is from here that the further upward movement towards the God-realisation starts. Therefore, now make an all-out effort to reach the goal, and do not waste your precious life in frivolities."

in essence the same. It is like the ocean and the drop, like the sun and the ray, the fire and the spark. The difference between the two is due to haumai or egoism. Liberation is a return to the inward being; bondage is enslavement to the object world, to dependence. When you search within, you find that the individual-self is similar to the Universalself. Then you realise your identity with God.

- 49. Laws of God. There are no written laws as such, but they have been deduced from the observation of nature and human nature.
- (1) The Law of Evolution. Scientists have demonstrated the truth of this law with regard to physical life. This law also holds good on the spiritual plane. Man can rise to Godhead by developing the divine potentialities in him.
- (2) The Law of Karma. Every cause has an effect and every effect has a cause. In scientific terminology, it is called the law of causation. Broadly speaking, it implies that if we sow wheat, we shall reap wheat. Whatever a man soweth, he reapeth. Shaikh Farid says, "Man sows evil and expect rewards. Look at human folly. If man really followed the law of Karma, he would

never commit sin or do evil. Before this present birth, one has lived many times and according to one's earnings or the past, one gets one's talents, opportunities and position."

The law of *Karma* does not imply that everything is preordained, and that man has no sort of free will. Man has a limited freedom of choice. He is free to choose between good and evil through his concience and possibly to realise the good by conscious effort, though three are many obstacles in this freedom of choice.\*

The Sikh Gurus modified the theory of *Karma* in two ways. They stated that *Karma* could be changed by the grace of God, and secondly, man's efforts are necessary to improve his condition. The Guru's philosophy implies that man is partly bound by *Karma* and partly free.

The aspect of *Karma* may be considered as under:

(a) Just as present life is the result of past Karma, the Present Karma determines future life. Karma operates in life and after-life.

<sup>\*</sup>The Gita: The law of Karma can be overcome by the affirmation of the freedom of spi i.

- (b) Repetition of same action—Karma—results in the formation of character. A man performing wicked deeds will turn into a bad character.
- (c) God is the creator of the first *Karma*—the origin of the universe, and also the destroyer of *Karma*.
- (d) Karma functions in the world of ego. When one surrenders one-self completely to God, he does not perform any Karma.
- (3) The Law of Heredity. Man is the product of circumstances. Broadly speaking, the physical, mental and moral qualities of the parents are the raw materials from which the individual gets his qualities according to his needs. The pressure of heredity and environment can be overcome by the will of man. But at the same time, it is possible to transcend those limits with the help of the law of evolution.
- (4) The Law of Universal Brotherhood. God is the Father of all creatures. So man must treat all His creatures as his own brethren. God distributes His gifts without any discrimination. He gives rewards even to those who deserve them the least, because He bears no ill-will to any one.

- (5) The Law of Re-birth. There is the cycle of birth and death. It is our past Karma which determines our ancestry, heredity and environment. To that extent, man's freedom is limited. Man must go through a series of births and death, till he obtains spiritual perfection. According to Guru Nanak, the wheel of transmigration can be broken by reabsorption in divine life, through Grace.
- (6) The Law of indestructibility of Matter. By physical or chemical reactions, things change from one into another, but if all that has changed is caught and stored, we shall see that not even a particle of matter or energy has been lost.
- (7) The Law of Right Conduct. This law enjoins us to do the right and to avoid the wrong in thought, word and deed. God dwells within the individual as conscience and guides him. If man disregards his conscience and acts otherwise, he must pay the penalty of transgressing the command of God. The law of right conduct includes the law of enough or contentment which brings peace of mind. It includes the law of health which implies that a sound mind can exist only in a sound body. It also includes the law of conduct which emphasises the need of associa-

tion with holy and great men. Tell me your company and I shall tell you what you are—is a well-known maxim. Like attracts like. Birds of a feather flock together. If you want to be pure and holy, associate with saintly and godly people. Good thoughts and actions are infectious. The noble actions of holy men inspire the anchorite and he teels that he can be as great as his preceptor. And finally the law of Hope—the basic law which cheers and inspires the devotee on his path to Divinity. Of course, without the Guru's grace or God's blessing, salvation is not possible, but all the same the pilgrim is sustained by hope of such grace in following the laws of God.

50. Obedience to Laws. God is the lord of the Universe; all objects are at his beck and call. Guru Nanak says, "All nature is in fear of Him—even gods, saints and heroes fear Him. The wind blows out of fear of Him, and out of fear of Him the fire burns. In fear of Him, is the King of Death and his court. In fear of Him are the sun and the moon. All fear Him, only the one Formless and True is without fear." He has right to rule over us because we are entirely His making. Just as a child ought to obey his

mother, and if he does not do so, he comes to harm and grief, in the same way those who disobey His laws go through the unending misery of birth and death.

Man in his pride and egoism becomes presumptuous enough to challenge the laws of God, but he comes to his senses when he has to face the scourge of death. By disobeying Him, we not only displease Him but also draw to ourselves pains and penalties. All sin and misery is the direct outcome of the defiance of His laws. All action implies reaction. Evil action implies evil consequence. If one disobeys the law of contentment and becomes greedy, one brings misery to oneself and others. If one transgresses the rules of health, one must undergo ill-health and disease. God's law applies to one and all without discrimination and the world's ills show what man has made of man.

51. Existence after death. Almost all religions believe in some sort of life after death. Death does not mean extinction. It is only one stage in the march of the soul.\* If there were no

<sup>\*</sup>The Gita: Just as a person casts off worn-out garments and puts on others that are new, even so does the disembodied soul cast off worn-out bodies and take on others that are new. (II, 22).

continuance of man after death, how would man be perfect, how would he realise God?

The Gurus believed in the immortality of the soul. If a man does not reach the goal within one life, he gets another opportunity in the form of another birth. The Gurus called it Awa Gawan, coming and going, or the cycle of birth and death. Undoubtedly, the soul has made a sort of progress, from lower forms of life to higher forms. It has passed through mineral, vegetable and animal existences. It goes through 84 lakhs of existence till it attains the human body. Guru Nanak says. "This soul has dwelt in many wombs." Elsewhere he says, "Like birds that flock in the evening on a tree, flutter with pleasure and pain, scan the skies, morning and evening wandering everywhere, driven by hunger, so the soul of man wanders and suffers on earth." There are two types of life possible to the individual soul after death:

- i. Merging into the Universal Soul.
- ii. Transmigration. The Gurus do not believe in heaven or hell where the souls are supposed to go.\* The Gurus use the words; heaven and hell

<sup>\*</sup>Heli and heaven refer to evil or good stages of life respectively and they can be lived here and now in our earthly existence.

in a metaphorical sense. They compare company of saints to heaven, and company of the evil-minded to hell.

What is the law of the transmigration of the soul? The individual soul after death gets into another existence according to its actions. If it has done evil deeds, it takes birth in the lower species. If it has done good deeds, it takes birth in some good family. But every type of next life is a result of one's actions. The cycle of birth and death keeps the soul away from Divinity. Haumai (egoism) is the partition-wall which separates the individual soul from the Universal soul. It can merge with the latter only through the Name. Then the human soul becomes one with God. This is the goal and summun bonum of human life.

52. Conquest of death. Let us first understand what is death. Death does not mean extinction, but the forgetting of the Lord. Guru Nanak says. 'If I remember Him, I live, when I forget Him, I am dead.' It is this forgetfulness which sends us again to successive wombs. There is no death for the devotee, because through his physical body ceases to exist, his soul is merged in the Eternal

Being. Death has no terror for the man of God.\* It is but a gateway to union with the Infinite. The Lover—the devotee—finds unending joy in the arms of the Beloved—The Almighty. The man of the world is afraid of death because he had not made any effort for winning heavenly reward. He has enjoyed the transient pleasures of life. He feels now the sting of death, and the fear of punishment for his evil deeds. For such a person it is once again the unending cycle of birth and death.

Blessed is he who looks forward to a union with the Supreme Being during his life; such a person is called the Living Immortal (Jivan-Mukt).

<sup>\*</sup>Kabir welcomes death and rejoices at the prospect of death. He says, "I feel happy when reminded of death, of which all men are afraid. It is through death that the soul merges into the Infinite." Tagore in the Gitanjali welcomes the angel of death as a guest and shows his readiness to accompany him into the unknown. In the Adi Granth, death of a devotee is compared to marriage—the union of the individual soul with the Universal soul. Hence it is an occasion for rejoicing, not for fear or grief.

## CHAPTER V.

## Rights and Duties of Human Beings

53. The content of man. Man is an image of God. Physically he is made of the five elements. He is conceived in the darkness of the womb. His body is a complex mechanism. The five senses carry impressions to the brain. The brain controls the physical system. The body is made up of bones, muscles, flesh, blood, skin and nerves. The functions of the body are motion, assimilation, reproduction, excretion and respiration. Each organ not only performs its functions but also works in harmony with other organs. The brain is the controlling agent of all the functions of the body.

The senses. There are five senses, namely, those of touch (hands and feet), tast (tongue), smell (nose), sight (eyes) and hearing (ears). Man is generally born with all these senses in a perfect condition. These five senses are called the organs of knowledge (Gian Indris). There are five other organs of action (Karma Indris). Such organs perform certain functions. They are the mouth, eyes, ears, hands and feet, private organ and anus,

which do speaking, seeing, hearing handling and walking, procreating and excreting respectively. The human body is therefore metaphorically called the city of nine gates. Both types of organs are essential for the individual. Man cannot live fully without the aid of these organs.

Man is undoubtedly an animal and something Man cooks and thinks, animals more also. cannot. Man has a mind which directs his aims and purposes. Animals satisfy primary needs like hunger and reproduction. Man has greater needs and thinks of ambition and achievement. Moreover, man has spirituality. He can attain salvation.\* The Guru says, 'Human life is a golden opportunity and if it is not devoted to meditation, it is simply wasted." Mortal man is ensnared by the delusive pleasures of the moment and clings to passing vanities and follies. therefore is drawn to sin and has to go through the cycle of birth and death. Life is not sinful in origin nor does man have to suffer for the original sin, as the Christians believe. Human life has a pure source. The world is not a place

<sup>\*</sup>Mohan Singh Diwana: The entire journey of life, individual-universal, is of God, from God to God. (Sikh Mysticism, 1964 p. 43).

of suffering as pessimists would have us believe, but the Abode of the True One. The body is unreal because it is subject to decay. Those who worship or decorate the body are simply courting disappointment. Man like a gardener must weed out the roots of evils, like a wrestler fight the five deadly sins, and like a bride yearn for the company of the bridegroom. It is only when man sets his heart on the eternal, on the imperishable truth that he can get real joy and bliss.

54. Constitution of man. Man is essentially a part of the Almighty, a ray of God's light, a spark of the Divine. The soul is a part of God. It clothes itself in a vesture called the body. Our body is a microcosm—a small world in which God lives. The whole universe is epitomised in the body. The three gunas—Rajo, Sato, Tamo—are within the body. It contains many hidden treasures. Guru Nanak says, "Within your own body is the true Pool of Immortality; let your mind drink the nectar there." God lives in it, but is not seen. At the time of death, the body ends, and the soul moves out. There are the three aspects of man: Atma (spirit), Budhi (intuition), Manas (intelligence). These three

elements constitute individuality or ego in man. Atma (the spirit) is a subtle thing. The aim of the human soul is to merge with the Universal Soul. Both of them have the same nature and quality. Bliss is attained by the union of the soul with the Almighty—"light is blended with light." Budhi (intuition) is the power by which the mind gets at the truth without reasoning or analysis. It is the inner light which is seen in inspired souls. Intuition differs from intellect in the fact that it neither requires the help of senses nor reason to arrive at truth. Manas (intelligence) dwells in the mind. It must not be confused with the soul. It must be held in control by constant practice of virtue. The mind runs after evil, anger, desires and passions. A stable mind neither feels the shock of pain nor the elation of pleasure.

55. The intellect. Intellect is that part of human mechanism which has the power to think and to understand. It is the business of the intellect to know the world and man's position therein. It must direct the individual to such acts as are in accordance with the laws of God. The intellect strives for the knowledge of truth; it goes deeper into things to explore their nature

and essence. It is reason which determines causes of things and studies the processes of the mind.

On its higher plane, the intellect must find out the principles of a good and pious life, must withdraw the mind from all evil thoughts, must think of God and duty to Him. To use the power of the intellect in obtaining technical know-how or the why-and-where-fore of creation gives little benefit to the individual. A proper use of intellect is likely to help the devotee in his progress on the road to salvation. The intellect can give us fragmentary hints of the Beyond, but it does not give the consciousness of the Beyond which comes by personal contact with an evolved soul. In spiritual life, faith is supplemented by true knowledge and subsequent inner experience.

56. Desire. It is a wish or craving or hunger for some object. The senses come across new objects, and fresh desires arise. They can be divided under two categories: selfish and unselfish. All selfish desires are irreligious because, they encourage the ego or haumai. Such a desire is confined to the advancement or amelioration of the lot of the individual only. Even vanity or boasting is criminal. All unselfish desires are moral and worth cultivation. The motive behind

such desires is the good of others and service of God's creation. Actions are moral or immoral according to the motives behind them.

57. The Will. Will is a power to do or not to do a thing. The will controls the senses and passions. The will is not subject to external control. It is independent and unfettered, and like a rudder steers the ship of life. It is a boon given by God to man and yet it ertails a heavy responsibility on the individual. It is responsible for all our actions.

The will must be exercised properly. It should be firm and stable. It must do the right and proper things. It must try hard and allow no like or dislike, joy or sorrow to dissuade one from doing what is right. The will is the cause and the guide of volition (wish) and act (movement).

God has given man a will so that he may be free to do things as he likes. We must obey Him of our own free will.\* A will that follows the good and harmonies with God's will is divine. A will that follows the ego and acts counter to

<sup>\*</sup>Man's free will is subject to physical, environmental and hereditary factors. To the extent, he is free to choose, he is morally responsible and subject to praise and blame.

the will of God is demonic and perverse. Broadly speaking, when we free ourselves from the ego or "I-am-ness", we exercise free-will.

58. The Conscience. Conscience is the inner voice within the individual.\* It tells him what is right and what is wrong. We become happy if we follow its commands: we suffer it we disobey it. Conscience puts us on guard against sin and evil. It is the source of all that is best in man. Inside the individual, there is a perpetual struggle between good and evil, between God and Satan in man. God dwells in each heart as conscience and judges every little thought and action of ours. The conscience denounces evil and supports justice and righteousness. The conscience differs in different persons, depending on the evolution of each individual. The conscience also differs at different times in its firmness and power to control human actions. Whenever we are in doubt, whether we should do a particular thing or not, we must appeal to the court of conscience. Persistent evil blunts the conscience and suppresses it.

<sup>\*</sup>Conscience can guide one to the will of God. Guru Nanak says, "How shall we know the will of God? The will of God is embedded in the very core of human personality."

(Japji, 1)

59. Purity of mind. So long as the mind remains contaminated with worldly desires and passions, it remains unclean and foul. Guru Nanak says that just as a dirty cloth can be washed by rubbing it with soap, in the same way the heart, polluted by sin and evil, can be cleaned by the magic power of the Holy Name. On account of previous action (Karma), the mind has become dirty. It will therefore require great effort and constant Sadhana to gain purity and virtue.

Just as we cannot see the bottom of a pool on account of the turbidity of water and the movement of ripples, in the same way we cannot see God until and unless desires (waves) come to an end and the mind becomes stable (with practice of virtue). It is the impurity of the mind which serves as an opaque screen. When it is removed, God becomes manifest—"Nanak's God is openly visible."

60. Egosim, Egoism (Haumai) means the assertion of the ego (egocentricity), or what some call *I-am-ness*. Like a cloud, haumai keeps God hidden from our sight.\* With the help of

<sup>\*</sup>The ego limits the Universal consciousness into individual consciousness, separating the Jiva Atma from Param Atma (God). This separate indentity is the root of evil and suffering.

the Guru, haumai vanishes and we get a glimpse of the Almighty. God like the sun is a source of heat and light, but it cannot give both to us when it is covered by a cloud. In the same way, the ego keeps the glory of God away from us. When the individual regards his son, his house, his wealth as his own, he is engaging in haumai, because in reality he is not the owner of anything. He does not own even the self, much less his sons, houses and riches. Egoism is a deadly disease. It is like a partition-wall which separates the individual soul from the Universal Soul.\*

In its ethical manifestation, haumāi assumes the role of pride, pride of learning, power, money. It leads to arrogance which acts as a veil between the individual soul and the Universal Soul.

The Guru says that for this disease of egoism there is a cure. *Haumai* is a wall created by our wrong approach. When the individual absorbs himself in the Universal, 'I' and 'you' are changed into 'He'. I and You are real only to a limited

<sup>\*</sup>Guru Nanak says, "Ignorance has its roots in the ego; it does not see Him in all things, but makes Him an image of itself."

extent. To lose the self is to become divine, to assert the self is to deny God. Gurmat or Bibek Budhi gives the realisation of the link between the finite and the Infinite. When the individual melts the self in the fire of love, he becomes one with the Creator.

61. Destiny. Destiny or fate is neither irrational nor erratic. It is based on the law of Karma (causation). All things in the universe are governed by law; so there is the natural law of Karma which means: as you sow, so you shall reap. What you have sown in the past, you reap here. What you sow now, you will reap hereafter.

Action is preceded by desire, and desire is preceded by thought. Thought builds character. Desire provides opportunities. Action creates environment. So we must be careful of actions. Guru Nanak says, "O foolish man! Why do you grumble, when you are rewarded according to your own actions?"

Sikhism accepts the law of Karma, Guru Nanak says, "Men are judged according to their acts. God is Truth and Truth prevails in His court. Some few are accepted and honoured.

The Merciful One sizes them according to their acts. The bad and the good are clearly distinguished." Again he says, "Actions shall be read out and the account will be explained in the presence of the Judge." Men do not become great or small by chance or by calling themselves so. They become noble or mean according to their acts. The recording angel records all man's acts.\* Hence God is not an unreasonable being delighting in man's suffering or sporting with His mortals. God does not, on His own, cause suffering: "The Creator takes no blame to Himself." Though all things work under His law. He does not generally undermine His own law by making exceptions. According to Guru Nanak, we sow the seed of Karma when, under the command of an asserting ego, we act for self-satisfaction and reap the harvest of suffering. When we learn to submit to His will, we cease to make new Karma. We act as instruments of His will; we sow no seed of action. We offer all our actions as a sacrifice and by a final act of self-surrender we remove the wall of separation

<sup>\*</sup>Chitra and Gupt are not the divine accountants, but the conscious (Chit) and the unconscious (Gupt) parts of the mind. The Dharamraj is the God-nature or soul within us.

and become one with Him. Of course when through the Guru's grace, the Lord is pleased, He tears away the record of actions, and in His great mercy, confers liberation from birth and death. Just as in the world, all crimes are punished by judges, but it is open to the King or President of a State to grant amnesty, in the same way, it is God's privilege to pardon an erring soul and exempt it from punishment.

## CHAPTER VI

## **ETHICS**

- 62. Duty. Duty means the liability to do a thing or to carry out a certain order. Duty and command go together. When there is a command it is the duty of the person to whom a command is issued to carry it out. Law is a command. It is rule laid down for the guidance of a person by one who has power or control over him. There are two types of laws: laws of God, laws of man. The laws of God are called divine laws or laws of nature. It is the duty of man to obey both the kinds of laws. If he disobeys them, he will come to grief.
- 63. One's duties. (1) One must keep the body clean and pure because it is the temple of God. One must wear neat and clean clothes.
- (2) One must not injure or disable the body in any way.

Yogis try to hurt the body, regarding it as an act of merit. But by doing it, they rather fail in their duty to God.

- (3) One must regard death as necessary for two reasons: firstly it is through death that the law of *Karma* is worked out; it is death which compels us to think of liberation and salvation. If there were no death, finer forms would be impossible. Secondly, the world be over-populted beyond imagination. Just think what will be the result.
- (4) One should regard all suffering as a result of one's *Karma* and one should not blame God for it.
- (5) One must follow the laws of health, because without health, one cannot make any advance on the spiritual plane.
- (6) One should be temperate in food and drink. Temperance in food means, one should avoid appetisers spices and things pleasing to the palate. Wine is forbidden by all great religions of the world. Guru Nanak says, "By drinking wine, one comes to grief."
- (7) One must not remain idle. An idle brain is the devil's workshop. One must keep busy in some healthy pursuit.
- (8) One must earn one's living and not be a parasite. If one does not work, one will be

disliked by relatives and friends. Dependence on others, when one can earn one's way brings a sense of guilt and shame. Guru Nanak says, "Exert yourself to earn a living and share with others; this is the way to know the Truth."

- (9) One must marry, if one can not otherwise lead a chaste life. *Brahmacharya* is for those who can live up to its pledge. It is possible to follow *Brahmacharya* in married life. Continence helps in spiritual efforts.
- (10) One must remain within a self-imposed discipline in order to help one's corporal and mental faculties.
- (11) One must do one's duty to family-members, to the community, to the country and to humanity. We owe a duty to people, to deal with them with justice, honesty and truth.
- (12) One must do one's duties to elders, respect them and minister to their needs if possible, relieve their distresses and console them in their afflictions.
- (13) One must do one's duties to equals by loving them, by showing them courtesy and consideration. One should set an example which may profitably be followed by others.

(14) One must do one's duties to one's inferiors by helping them and providing their wants if possible.

These duties are illustrative and do not exhaust the content of the whole objective of man.

64. Duties to others. One's superiors are the King (or the President), the boss, the parents, the teacher, and the aged. One must be loyal and faithful to the Head of the State and be ever ready to serve him. Patriotism and public service are the best forms of devotion to the country. One must respect and obey one's boss. Worldly wisdom requires that one must get on well with one's boss, because the latter is in a position to make or mar one's career. One must be dutiful and obedient to one's parents and grateful to them for all help or advice. Likewise the teacher ought to be honoured and loved because he gives one the light of knowledge. One should respect and serve old men, and by doing so, one learns humility and wisdom from them.

With regard to one's equals, one must show them kindness, courtesy, hospitality and consideration. One must deal with them honestly, frankly and co-operatively. Character is built by fair dealing with one's equals. One's inferiors may either be less evolved in spirituality, lower in social status or younger in age. Love and benevolence towards inferiors win respect and popularity. One must show them sympathy and compassion. One must offer one's strength to the weak and guide and protect them. If they are in want, one must give in charity or minister to their needs. With regard to the socially low, benevolence implies ameliorating their general condition and improving their economic position.

only in its object but also in its context and circumstances. It must also be good in its end or result. It must be done with a good intention or motive. If any of its concomitants is bad, the whole action becomes evil. The motive determines the goodness or otherwise of an act Prayer, service of the poor and the weak, and sacrifice for a noble cause are good actions. The Guru has laid down a test for all actions. If an action brings one nearer to God, it is good; if an action keeps one away from God, it is evil. We must make honest attempts to do good acts assiduously, just as we must exert our utmost to avoid evil in any shape or form. One must do what is right and good.

That is the only way to happiness. Unless a man does the right thing in the right spirit, no amount of pious intention, lip-homage or out-ward formality will earn him the goal of salvation. Also an action done in a spirit of sacrifice or for the sake of charity, without entertaining any hope of reward is a good action.

66 Bad action. A bad action is either evil in its objects or evil in its circumstances or evil in its results, or is inspired by evil motives. An action otherwise innocent becomes bad if it contains one of these ingredients. A bad action gives prominence to the ego and unbecoming human desire. Bad actions arise out of bad desires which in turn are due to bad thoughts. As a man thinks, so he becomes. People do not realise the need of good thoughts. They affirm that a bad thought is harmless if it does not lead to a bad action. This is a wrong notion. Serious efforts should be made to control the mind. Guru Nanak says, "One who conquers the mind can conquer the whole world."\* One must avoid evil. idle or foolish thoughts. It is only when the mind is free from evil that good can enter it. Evil actions arise out of lust, anger, greed, desire

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth, p. 7.

and pride. There are certain other evil actions like lying, drinking, begging gambling, abusing and back-biting. Evil actions throw man into the cycle of birth and death.

with men produce vital results. If you touch pitch, you will be defiled. Evil is infectious; it produces moral corruption and spiritual ill-health. Secondly, a vicious example is sooner followed than a good example. Evil thoughts and persons corrupt good men. A man is known by the company he keeps. If he associates with evil men, he will inevitably share their qualities. We will be called to account and asked to explain why we kept bad company. Shaikh Farid says, "The *Dharam Raja* will question you, if you associate with an evil person." Guru Nanak says:

He will repent who keeps, The company of evil-doers; To talk evil is to waste life.

68. Good Company. For spiritual progress, company of holy men is necessary. A saint gives divine knowledge, teaches purity through personal example, kindles the heart with universal love, removes the five great vices and tells the manner

of remembering the Holy Name. In his presence, the disciple gets an inspiration. Psychologically, association of holy men acts as a deterrent against evil thoughts and evil deeds. The disciple regards all men as equals and friends. He follows the daily routine of his guide. Just as trees which grow near the sandal tree acquire the fragrance of the sandal, just as metals touched with the philosophers's stone are transmuted into gold, in the same way an average person becomes noble and spiritual in the company of a holy man. Lehna became Guru Angad in the company of Guru Nanak. Guru Nanak says, "By associating with" the holy and remembering God, even the fallen become purified." Kabir says, "According to the company one keeps, is the fruit one eats; keep the company of a good man, he will take care of you at the last." In all humility, Guru Nanak seeks the dust of the feet of holy men\* Just as pitch defiles and talc whitens, in the same way, holiness inspires virtue. Good comes from the good, evil from the evil. The evil of the individual is purged by the good, so to say by a divine spark, and good now advances to fill the void left by evil. Guru Arjan says, "The society of saints

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth: The company of saints is the school of the Guru, where one learns the godly attributes.

removeth all sins; the society of saints secures comforts in this world and next."

69. Eating of flesh. There is a controversy on this topic. The Guru neither advocates nor orbids the eating of flesh. Of course, Guru Gobind Singh prohibited the use of Halal meat jagged in the Muslim fashion. He permitted the Sikhs to take Jhatka. It is futile to debate on this question. Guru Nanak says:

Fools wrangle about eating meat,

They know not the truth, or the way of right action,

Or the difference between meat and vegetables, And acts which are sinful and those that are sinless,

In flesh we are conceived, from flesh we are born;

We are vessels of flesh.\* (A.G. p.)

Mere absentinence cannot confer spiritual merit. It is said that when Shri Amardas went for the first time to Khandur to see Guru Angad, the latter offered him dal and bread, knowing the vaishnava tenets of Amardas. The latter saw other disciples taking meat in the langar; so making a break with his past, he tasted meat on a

<sup>\*</sup>Macauliffe-The Sikh Religion, Vol. 1, p. 47.

common platform with the sangat. Spirituality is not based on food or an item of the menu. No food is forbidden to a Sikh, except that which produces pain or evil Guru Nanak says, "Brother, that food, that pleasure is vain, which leades the mind to sin and makes the body writhe in pain." Equally fruitless is the debating on the question of fish or eggs; whether they are vegetables or otherwise. A vegetarian and teetotaller avoiding meat and wine may yet be steeped in sin. So flesh-eating neither helps nor retards spiritual evolution.

70. Virtue. Virtue is the ability to do good. It means doing good actions in obedience to the commands of the Guru and for the sake of obtaining liberation (Moksha) from the cycle of birth and death. Virture includes improvement of oneself, becaue the progress of the individual ultimately leads to the goods of mankind. All great virtues in one form or another help the progress of mankind. The virtue of the individual is not the mere concern of the individual. He is a member of the community and as such the concern of the group. If he is selfish, he affects others and remains indifferent to the welfare of others. So the practice of virtue has repercussions

on the lot of the community. In this way the practice of individual virtue is a social responsibility.

The practice of virtue lies generally in following the golden mean. All extremes are evil. All virtue generally pertains to compromise between two poles. The virtue of temperance is a golden mean between gluttony on the one hand and abstinence on the other; fortitude is a compromise between fear and rashness. Excessive study confuses the mind, extreme frugality results in meanness. The practice of virtue implies finding a via-media between two extremes.

Virtue is conducive to the acquisition of happiness and contentment. Mortal man's lot is far from satisfactory. Even his best songs have a strain of sorrow. The afflictions of the body and the mind dog him at every step. Man is weak; his infirmities have been known to all great teachers and saints. Even if the individual is free from sorrows or sickness, those of others are bound to lessen his joys. Besides, there are so many things which are beyond one's control. Many times the unexpected happens, much to the discomfiture of the individual. His hopes end infrustrations; his dreams are dashed to the ground;

the glowing visions turn to dust. Not even the greatest and the noblest are free from disappointments, anxieties, pin-pricks, the 'slings and arrows of outrageous fortune'. In order to overcome such vexations and crosses, one must cultivate the virtues of patience, forbearance and resignation. If we do not cultivate them, we shall be multiplying our sorrows and fears. Contentment is a cure of the world's many ills. Guru Arjan says, "Without contentment, no one gets true tranquillity of mind." Nam can cause the inner changes like the sun ripening fruits and crops.

71. Types of Virtue. Different religions recommend different virtues. There are five principal virtues: truth, contentment, self-control, patience, good-will. Christianity exphasises four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance. These virtues are regarded as important because all moral qualities hinge on them. Without them it is not possible to make any progress on the road to salvation. Virtues attract grace and bring the soul nearer to Divinity. The Sikh Gurus have through their lives demonstrated the value of such virtues for the attainment of bliss.

72. Sikh Virtues. Truth has the first place among virtues, because it is the very basis of spiritual evolution. Guru Nanak says, "Truth is a remedy of all ills and washes away all sins. Nanak humbly bows to those who possess the truth." Truth also stands for the Ultimate Reality. It is difficult to define truth and yet we all know what it means.\* It includes righteousness, sincerity, honesty, uprightness, frank-ness, justice, impartiality, which give rise to trust and mutual respect. Truth stands on its own, it needs no props. It is as obvious as an axiom. Our conscience prompts us to speak the truth. A lie is a fabrication; one has to wrack one's brain in order to render it plausible. By telling a lie, we not only deceive others but also deceive ourselves. This produces moral corruption. Speak what you mean and perform what you Do not try to be over-clever and explain away your lies. A lie helps in deceiving some one. A lie need not take the form of words. A lie may be implied by silence, by

<sup>\*</sup>Bhai Gurdas: Devotion, penance, sacrificial fire, feasts, fasting, austerities, pilgrimages, alms-gifts, the service of gods and goddesses, ceremonies are all inferior to truth. Truth is a current coin, falsehood a counterfeit copper.

emphasis, by equivocation, by a glance of the eye or by a gesture. by a false weight, coin, stamp, seal or mark. A plain and simple lie can be easily contradicted, but a lie, a part of which is true, is difficult to refute. An excuse or explanation is worse than a lie because it covers a lie with a mark or disguise. Half-truths are more dangerous than straight lies.

Guru Nanak told Bhumia the thief to desist from lying. He never prevented him from stealing, because he knew that the secret of reform lay in truth. There is a proverb: Falsehood shortens life. Perhaps the man who is deceived by a lie will curse the liar and this may effect his life. Ultimately truth is bound to be out: "Truth will prevail in the end."\*

73. Contentment. Contentment lies in feeling satisfied with what one has. A contented man is free from envy, greed and jealousy. When one feels that one has not enough, he can gets consolation if he compares himself to another who has nothing. A one-eyed man must thank himself that he is not blind. Iz ac Walton, an

<sup>\*</sup>Guru Arjan: The seed of the testament of the Guru cannot germinate except in the field of ethical conduct, constantly irrigated by the waters of truth.

English writer says, "Every misery that I miss is a new mercy." Every misery I overcome is a new gain for the growth of my soul. The ups and downs of life enrich one's character and experience. God has been kind enough to spare one from the afflictions of one's less fortunate brothers. Adversity is no punishment, because in poverty, there are few temptations and one turns to God. Adversity tests one's friends and virtues. Guru Nanak says, "Misery is a medicine: happiness is a disease." When one is prosperous, one forgets God, that is why prosperity is spiritually undesirable. The Christians emphasise the vow of voluntary poverty. The contented mind accomodates itself to every adverse change, be it poverty, distress, sickness or sorrow. It accepts these things with equanimity and cheerfulness. A discontented man multiplies his sorrows by comparing his lot with fortune's favourities. On the other hand, a contented mind is always full of gratitude and joy. Guru Arjan says. "Without contentment, it is impossible to acquire true peace of mind."

74. Self-Control. Self-control is necessary to kill foul desires. One has to wage a constant and ceaseless war against evil. Generally, vice

raises its head in the mind and therefore the mind should be controlled. Guru Teg Bahadur says, "The mind seeks evil, but with Guru's word, it can be controlled." The first thing is to keep the mind busy or occupied. When an evil thought comes, one should stand up in prayer and seek God's aid. Gandhi ji in his book Self-indulgence versus Self-control recounts how he kept the vow of Brahmacharya with the help of prayer. Secondly, one must learn concentration. One should keep the mind fixed on some goal or ideal. One must not only control the thoughts but also check the desires of the will and the activities of the senses. Our organs of action (Karam Indries) should be kept away from mischief.

We must exercise control in passing hasty judgments. Never form an opinion without hearing the other side. God has given us two eyes so that we may see enough, two ears that we may hear both the sides of a matter, but one month so that we may speak as little as possible. The tongue is capable of inflicting serious wounds. When judging a man, put a charitable construction on his faults and give him the benefit of doubt. One must frequently examine and interrogate oneself. When you explore your inner

self, you will find that you are not less sinful than others. It is always good to maintain a diary of one's actions and words, so that one may be able to correct oneself. Read your daily diary loudly to yourself at night. You will find that this will have a healthy and moral effect on you.

75. Patience. Patience means courage to bear bravely all trials for the love of God and to resist anything which hinders our salvation. God tests his devotees in various ways.\* So one must be firm and steady in performing one's duty even if it be difficult and irksome. One must never give way to disappointment in the face of odds. The true devotee screws up his courage to the level of the test.

Thought shall be the keener, heart the harder, Mind the stronger, as our might lessens.

To exercise forbearance when one is in a position to undo or punish one's opponent is a great quality. Guru Arjan suffered all the tortures at the hands of Chandu, just to set an example

<sup>\*</sup>Guru Amardas says, "There is no greater penance than patience, no greater happiness than contentment, no greater evil than greed, no greater virtue than mercy and no more potent weapon than forgiveness.

of patience and sacrifice to his flock. The noble soul does not feel physical or mental pain. The mind is so trained that it remains tranquil and calm in the midst of adversity and pain. The seeker looks to the ideal and never falters or wavers in his pursuit of it. God in turn never forsakes those who suffer for the sake of His creation in selflessness and singleness of purpose. The Sikh Gurus have shown great patience in the face of great provocations and tortures. Guru Arian says, "Thy servant Nanak stands ready as a sacrifice," and again, "What Thou givest, I treat as a blessing." The Sikh martyrs have also displayed exemplary forbearance in the face of death. They suffered for therir faith with a smile on their lips and the Holy Name on their tongues.

76. Good-will for all. The fatherhood of God implies the brotherhood of man. We are all members of the same family and must love one another. God loves all men and those who wish to love Him should love what He loves. Shaikh Farid says, "If you love God, injure not the heart of any person." Guru Gobind Singh says, "You know that God abides in every heart and so it is your duty to treat every one with respect." The test of one's love of God is the

measure of ones love for His creation. Even the poor ought to be treated well. Just as the heart of a parent leans to a helpless child on account of his helplessness, so God favours those who love the poor and respect them. Good-will also implies kindness for animals, birds and insects. The Sikhs treat kindly all creatures because they are the creation of the Almighty. In the daily prayer (Ardas), the Sikh seeks the good of all (Sarbat Ka Bhala).

77. Courage. Humility and tolerance do not imply that the individual should make compromises with his principles. One should have the courage of one's convictions. Guru Gobind Singh combined Bhagti with Shakti. Without courage, the Sikhs would be at the mercy of any tyrant or dictator. The purpose behind the creation of the Khalsa was to enrol a band of saint-soldiers who may even die in their stand against oppression. The true Sikh must speak out againt injustice, corruption and high-handedness and not be cowed down by threats or temptations. It is his Dharma to do the right and face the consequences. Bhai Mansukh, Guru Nanak's disciple in Ceylon, showed his guts in refusing to obey the King's command of compulsory fast. Ultimately, he succeeded in converting the king to his own way of thinking. This kind of courage is next only to martyrdom. Its adds to one's moral stature and helps in spiritual evolution. Guru Gobind Singh inculcated this trait among the Sikhs by challenging the might of Aurangzeb, in spite of heavy odds. He writes,

'O God! Grant me this boon Never to keep away from good deeds, Nor feel afraid when facing misfortunes, Rather with firm resolve, have hope of success.

78. Sin. Different religions define sin in different ways.\* Christianity regards it as a moral fault. There are seven capital sins in Christianity: Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy and Sloth. Sikhism regards sin as wilful disobedience of the Laws of God. Guru Nanank says, "We sin when we fail to follow the divine law of love. We sin when we trespass on the rights of others for our selfish ends, when we cause any harm." Sin is committed either by neglecting

<sup>\*</sup>S. Radhakrishnan: Sin is not the violation of a law or a convention but the central source of all finiteness, ignorance, assertion of the independence of the ego, which seeks its own private gain at the expense of others.

what is enjoined or doing what is forbidden. A deed done from a sense of duty or by mistaken notion of it does not affect the moral nature of the individual. It has however to be atoned for through suffering, but it does not degrade the character of the individual.

In order to avoid vice, we shou'd have knowledge of the vice itself, a realisation that it is wrong to do it and finally the will to overcome it or sublimate it. The vices differ in so far as they pertain to different social levels. The vices towards one's superiors takes the form of anger or wrath, those towards inferiors take the form of hate or ill-treatment. Real repentence frees a man from sin.

79. The Five Vices. According to Sikhism, the cardinal vices are five: Lust (Kam), Anger (Karodh), Greed (Lobh), Worldly Love (Moh), Pride (Ahankar). These are regarded as the five arch enemies of man. They pull him down and lead him to the cycle of birth and death. Guru Nanak dilates on these sins thus: "pleasure of gold, the pleasure of silver, the pleasure of women and the scent of perfume, the pleasure of horses, the pleasure of the couch and palace, the pleasure of sweets, the pleasure of the body, how can the

True Name find a dwelling in the heart?" The body clings to the pleasures of the senses. Man regards these illusory joys as enduring things. This illusion is responsible for sorrow and suffering. This intoxication brings the infatuation of desire, anger and egoism. So long as man remains a slave of passions and desires, he remains confined in the sphere of worldiness. He may shift the fault to others, but it is he who brings sorrow and mischief to himself. Escape is possible only when Reality dawns on him.

80. Lust. Lust is the desire for gratification of sexual appetite. Normal sexual pleasure with one's wife is not forbidden. What is forbidden is excessive indulgence in it which is harmful to the individual. Lust leads to immodesty and vulgarity in words and deeds. Lust in thought and word is not an offence under the Indian Penal Code. Lust is a grave sin and produces nothing but shame and misery. Guru Arjan says, "O Lust, you lead to hell and to the cycle of birth and death."

Lust can be avoided if the mind rejects an unholy thought. *Brahmacharya* as understood by ancient sages and *rishis* meant purity in thought, word and deed. The control of sexual appetite

is possible in married life. Guru Gobind Singh says, "Increase love with your wife, but never dream of another man's wife." It is necessary to keep the mind engaged in some healthy pursuit. One should think more of social and noble accomplishments of women than of their physical charms and blandishments. There are some games and pursuits which encourage this vice, as for example, gambling, drinking, reading pornographic literature, seeing made dances and pictures which excite passion. Finally, one must seek God's help in overcoming this vice. Pray to the Almighty to keep you pure in throught, would and deed.

81. Anger. Anger is excitement of the mind due to some insult or slight or supposed injury. Anger leads to quarrels, violence and sometimes to murder. It produces hatred, revenge, ill-temper harshness, oppression, cruelty, foul language, scorn and peevishness. Guru Arjan says:

Wrath pitiless, and seed of strife You conquer even the great, And they dance like monkeys.

Anger can be controlled by the exercise of patience, humility and love. Never brood over wrongs nor make schemes of revenge. Just wait

for some time. Time is a great healer. Wrath is conquered by foregiveness and friendliness. Hatred cannot be conquered by hatred; it can be conquered only by love. Great teachers like Christ and Buddha have dwelt on the value of love and forgiveness. Return good for evil and you will surely win over your worst enemy. Do not cause pain to others. Look at the earth. You dig it up, and in turn, it gives you metals and previous stones. Kabir says, "People cast stones at the cherry-tree and in turn it gives forth sweet cherries."

God dwells in every human heart. So use no harsh words towards any one, for after all these words hurt the God within man. Commit no aggression or wrong; cause no affliction to others: "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." This is the code of conduct.

82. Avarice. Avarice is desire for money or love of gain. Riches have no merit in the eyes of God. They are of no use in ensuring life, health and freedom from pain. Guru Nanak says, "The root of suffering is evil—the greed of self which burns life in unquenched fire; the

more it is fed, the stronger its flames rise. People do not give it up and so the root of suffering remains and men like flies die in search of the sweets of life."

Avarice leads to fraud, lying, treachery, dishonesty, breach of trust, gluttony, sloth and callousness. It disturbs the mind and causes unhappiness to others. A greedy man can never be contented even if he gets all that he wants. Our wants are many, while our real needs are few. Much wants more; the hoarding and accumulation of wealth is just a blind passion. Guru Arjan says, "O evil covetousness, it has no respect for friends or relations." A greedy man is out to bleed his nearest and dearest ones, and shows no consideration for his kith and kin.

Avarice can be conquered by contentment. Of course, frugality should be practised as far as possible, but peace of mind can come only through minimisation of wants. Do not think only in terms of money; life is something greater than money. Be generous and liberal, and remember that wealth is a trust. Joy lies in giving and not receiving gifts. There is a proverb, "What I spent, I had. What I saved, I lost. What I gave, I have." After all we have to leave

our wealth and property at the time of death. Guru Nanak cured Lala Dunichand of the malady of covetousness by asking him to accept a deposit of a needle to be returned in the next world. Lala Dunichand then realised the folly of hoarding wealth. Moreover, money or property is a source of anxiety and trouble. One becomes a slave of money and not its master. Excessive wealth creates desire for luxury and vice which ultimately lead to sorrow.

83. Attachment. Excessive love of worldly objects is called attachment-moh. It may take the form of self-love, love of wife and children, love of physical joys, love of easy life or love of worldly possessions. Excessive love will make one indifferent to duty. Fondness for any pleasure or enjoyment will make one neglect God. Guru Nanak says:

"The love of family is born of attachment toself.

Abondon attachment, it is replete with darkness. O, brother, wave off the delusion of attachment and doubt."

The cure of worldly love lies in the practice of renunciation. Regard you near and dear ones

as objects of trust. They cannot be yours for long. Do not be attached to them. Self-assertion is the disease, self-surrender the cure. Guru Arjan says, "The man who loves a passing traveller merely wastes his time." Worldly objects are like passing shadows, they change or pass and therefore should not be clung to. They are unreal. He alone is the Real.

84. Pride. Pride is the blackest and the vilest of the five vices. Pride implies excessive conceit or self-esteem. Pride always leads to a spiritual fall. Look at Joga Singh: what a faithful and devoted Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh! He responded to Guru's call and left his own marriage uncompleted. Yet, he was caught by the charms of a loose woman. It was pride which led him to a house of ill-fame. He was fortunately saved from a spiritual fall by the grace of Guru Gobind Singh. Bhai Gurdas had to suffer for his pride. The proud man feels that others must hold as high an opinion of him as he holds of himself.

Pride takes different forms. It may be sheer vanity or arrogance; it may be irritability or touchiness, it may be boast or bluster, it may be boast or bluster, it may be ambition or selfishness. It may be envy, jealousy or contempt of others, pride of dress, tastes, talents and qualifications. Pride is the root of egoism which shuts out self knowledge and salvation. Guru Angad says, "It is the ego which ties man down to the world and sends him on a round of birth." Guru Amardas says, "Vanity is the root of all evils." Guru Arjan says, "O sinful pride, cause of transmigration, you make people abondon friends and hold fast unto enemies."

The vain and the arrogant deny the existence of God. They challenge their worldly superiors and plot against them. They show disrespect to or hatred for others because they think that nobody can equal them in ability or power.

The cure for pride lies in practising the virtue of humility. This enables us to take our right place in the world. We begin to realise that there are other people who are better or abler than us. We should neither despise our superiors nor run down our inferiors. We should treat everyone with modesty and consideration. We can learn humility from saints and Gurus. When old Guru Amardas was kicked by Datu, he never showed any resentment but humbly remarked that his

hard bones must have hurt Datu's feet. Humility is the priceless possession of saints. Kabir says. "It is possible to give up wealth, but it is hard to abondon pride." The renunciation of egoism leads to merger with the Divine.

Humility and forgiveness go togethe. If anyone offends you, do not bear ill-will to him Forgive him and thus show your telerance. Kabir says:

Where the virtue of forgiveness prevails There the Lord Himself resides!

Allied to humility is compassion. It is an outcome of the belief in the light of God shining in every soul. Shaikh Farid says:

'Rebuke not anyone, the True Lord resides in all.

Hurt not anyone, precious are the souls of all!

## PART IV SIKH RELIGION

## CHAPTER VII Principles of Sikh Religion

- 85. Special Features. (i) Sikhism is a practical religion.\* It does not consist in a certain set of beliefs or mere words. Religion does not imply wandering to shrines and tombs, or following austerities of Yogis. Sikhism is a way of life, something to be lived according to a pattern. Its main virtue is simplicity. There is no supernaturalism or mythology on which it rests. It does not believe in devils or angels or heavenly spirits.
  - (ii) Sikhism is a universal religion. It is not meant for a small section or group; it is the religion of humanity. Guru Nanak preached to the high and the low, without any distinction of caste, creed or colour.

<sup>\*</sup>Payne: Guru Nanak realised that a religion, if it is to be a living force, must be a practical religion, one that teaches mankind not how to escape from the world but how to live worthly in it, not how evil is to be avoided, but how it is to be met or overcome.

- (iii) Sikhism is opposed to all ritualism and formalism. Strangely enough, some Sikhs recently have started following certain rituals. the very thing which the Gurus discouraged.
  - (iv) Sikhism does not enjoin blind faith. Guru Nanak says: "Serve the Lord with wisdom and give alms with common sense." Blind obedience to an external authority is discouraged. The death of the intellect can not be a condition of the life of the spirit. Faith does not start with surmises or absurdities. God is not a mere assumption but something which you can perceive as a living force when you follow the path shown by the Guru. Religion is not a hypothesis but a fact of experience. The mystic experiences of seers show the reality of bliss of contact with the Eternal.
  - (v) Sikhism is a faith of hope and cheer. Though it affirms Karma, it recognises the possibility of the modification of one's Karma with the grace of the Guru or God. It does not lead to despair and defeatism. By citing examples of various sinners and villains, it affirms the faith of the erring

soul in achieving the final goal with patience and perseverance. In his daily prayer-Ardas-the Sikh seeks inspired optimism—Chardi Kala. It is the intention and the effort that count and not the reward.

- (vi) Sikhism is a democratic religion. The religious institutions and trusts are managed by a committee elected by Sikh adults. The decisions of the Sangat are regarded as resolutions having the force of law (Gurmatta), Guru Gobind Singh vested the authority of the organisation in the Panth.
- 86. Basic Articles. (i) Unity of God. There is but One God. He is Unborn, Omnipotent, Infinite, Formless, All-knowing and All-pervading.
- (ii) Equality. All men are equal. God is our Father and we are His children. There is none high or low on account of birth or position or riches. There is no privileged or priestly class among the Sikhs. Men and women are treated as equals.
- (iii) Faith. One must have perfect faith in the Guru. Grace cannot be obtained except

with the guidance of a perfect teacher. Perfect submission to the Guru's command is an eesential condition: "One who surrenders his mind to the Guru will have all his aims fulfilled." The word Sikhism literally means the way of the disciple. The disciple must follow the Guru's word. When the disciple realises the presence of God, the Guru embraces him as his equal. For this very reason, Guru Gobind Singh begged of the Panch Piyaras to baptise him,\*

(iv) Love of God. We can love God only when we cease to love ourselves. We must first destroy the ego (haumai). Love of God implies the love of His creation—"O heart, love God as the fish loves water."\*\* The destruction of egoism leads to the eternal bliss of merging into the Divine—'As water mingles with water, so the light merges in the light."\*\*\*

<sup>\*</sup>Guru Gobind Singh himself asked to be initiated as the sixth member of the Khalsa (The Sikh courier, July 1964, p. 5).

<sup>\*\*</sup>Adi Granth, p. 60.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Adi Granth, p. 278.

- (v) Character-building. If the mind is impure, it cannot deserve union with Divinity. Just as milk cannot be poured into a dirty cup without risk of decomposition, in the same way Nam cannot dwell in an impure heart. Guru Nanak says: "Devotion cannot exist without virtue." "Truth is no doubt great, but greater is truthful living." The development of character is the only foundation on which the edifice of discipleship can be raised. Ethical life is the very basis of spiritual discipline. The qualities which one should cultivate assiduously are humility, charity, forgiveness and sweet words. Conquer the five deadly sinslust, anger, greed, attachment and pride. Morality is an important step in the path of discipleship.
- (vi) Nam: The practice of the Name is anessential duty of a Sikh.\* Guru Arjan says, "Remember the Name of God and give up everything else. Remember Him and persuade others to do likewise." The

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth: The limitation and the sickness in the soul of man can be removed only by mercerising it with the chemical of the Name.

Guru seeks the dust of the feet of those who remember the Name and make others remember it. One who preaches the Name but does not practise it himself is bound to go through the cycle of birth and death. Simaran is the practice of the presence of God. It is God-vision. As we think, so we become. When we contemplate the great and noble qualities of Divinity—He is All-Merciful, All-Truthful—we begin to imbibe some of His qualities. Man like God can be fearless and devoid of enmity. It is by meditation that we attain to the glory and greatness of the Almighty. Then there is no difference between the disciple and the Supreme Being. Guru Arjan says in Sukhmani "Brahm-Giani is the Supreme Being Himself."

87. Main Principles. The word 'Sikh' means a disciple. So Sikhism is essentially the path of discipleship. Sikhism implies the practising of godliness in the midst of everyday duties. A Sikh is an ascetic within and secular without. The true devotee remains unattached to worldly things just as the lotus keeps its blossom over and above the surface of water.

The Sikh must do his duty to his family and to the community. The main thing is leading a pure and moral life, full of noble deeds and kind words. A man's duty is to serve and not to lord over others. He must work hard to earn his own living. He must not idle away time or live as a parasite. A Sikh does not regard fasting, austerities, pilgrimages, alms-giving and penance as important things. For him the only important thing is Simaran or contemplation of the Almighty. But this contemplation does not come of its own accord. It has to be deserved by submission to the Guru. It is only when his grace is earned that the Name dwells within the heart, conferring infinite bliss.

88. The Blessed One. A saint is called Brahmgiani or Jivan-mukt.\* He is the equal of the Supreme Being. He possesses certain noble qualities and leads an ideal life. A saint is one who has conquered his ego (haumai) and risen above the five deadly sins of lust, anger, greed,

<sup>\*</sup>Dr. Taran Singh: Matter and soul interact continually. The purer the mind, the freer the soul. In human form, the cooperation of the two can reach its highest. The state of best cooperation between matter and soul is the state of Jivan Mukt. (The Missionary, Vol. I, No. 3, p. 146)

attachment and pride. A saint meditates on God, day and night. He is indifferent to pain and pleasure, praise or bame. He is humble and poor in spirit and loves to serve all creatures without any distinction of sex, caste or colour.\* The saint sees God in all sentient and nonsentient things. All that meets the eye is God, the Divinity which lies deep in him and which now reigns in all glory. Seeing God everywhere, he knows no pain or loneliness. Friend and foe alike are His forms sent to test his love and guide the soul home to Him. He feels happy in the eternal presence of God. The saint exclaims: "Wherever I look, there is God." By constant meditation, his 'I' vanishes and it becomes 'Thou'. The saint loves to save a lost soul like a shepherd going in search of a strayed lamb. He must practise patience to redeem the sinner and bring him to the true path.

89. Bhagti. Those who know the importance of Bhagti feel like Guru Nanak that forgetting God is just like death and brooding upon His Name is life and joy. Without the nectar of God's name, the pilgrim dies his misery.

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth: The God-conscious man is animated with an intense desire to do good in this world. (Sukhmani)

The word *Bhagti*, also spelt as Bhakti, is derived from the Sanskrit root *bhaj* which means to serve, that is to do the service of the Lord. The Bhagti movement which began in medieval India was further enriched by Guru Nanak. The common assumptions of Bhagats like Kabir, Trilochan Farid and Sadhna are the exaltation of meditation above *Gian* and *Karma* and the practice of the Holy Name. Guru Nanak added something new to the previous concepts, namely the rejection of caste distinctions, the need of good company, resignation to the will of God and mental detachment within domestic life. Guru Nanak reconciled a householder's life with spiritual life.

But Bhagti\* is possible after certain conditions are fulfilled:

- (i) Faith in God.
- (ii) Following Truth.
- (iii) Unattachment and desirelessness.
- (iv) Control over throught, word and deed.
- (v) Association with holy men (Satsang).
- (vi) Humility and submission to Hukam.

<sup>\*</sup>Bhagti is a relationship of trust and love to a personal God just like a wife's devotion and attachment to her husband.

Meditation or Bhagti does not mean lip-worship or reciting *Gurbani* loudly. It means living in His Love and wonder. The realisation of One God without and within brings a joy that knows no end. Even physical suffering purifies the soul. Misery acts like a purge. Guru Nanak says, "Pain is a medicine, hunger or affliction a blessing." The devotee cares not for the world's opinion, because he is absorbed in pleasing His Master. By feeding on the nectar-hymns, the man of God finds bliss in his union with the Supreme Being.\*\*

Practice brings perfection, so also in the realm of religion, constant and ceaseless devotion beings untold and eternal bliss.

90. Salvation. The word salvation (Mukti) implies different things in different sects. For the jogi, mukti is freedom from consciousness through samadhi, for the Vedanti it is union with the Brahm through knowledge, for the Buddhist, it is annihilation of pain (Nirvana), for the Mimansai, it is transport into heaven (Surag).

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth, p. 5.

<sup>\*\*</sup>The satisfaction of normal physical needs is necessary for Bhagti. Kabir says, "I cannot meditate while starved. Oh God, take back the rosary!"

The Guru disregards such concepts. The Guru says, "The man of God rejects salvation. wants only love of God and nothing else. The joys of heaven are nothing as compared to the merging in the Divine Spirit. The ultimate goal of man is union with God. Man does not become God, only the spark merges in the fire. This is called self-identification.\* Mukti or Moksha means nearness to God. Just as a child enjoys sights and games in a fair when he is in the company of the mother, but feels unhappy when he is separated from her, in the same way the man of God enjoys the sights of the world because he is in His company. Guru Nanak says, "By associating with the Satguru, the way of living is perfected, and even while laughing, playing, dressing and eating, salvation is obtained." The Sikh lives in the midst of society, earns an honest living and engages in the service of others, so that his actions do not degenerate into a manifastation of ego.

A man may have done many noble deeds but if he has not undertaken meditation on God, he

<sup>\*</sup>Mohan Singh Diwana: When we identify ourselves with some body, love being a two-way traffic, we simultaneously, automatically receive all that he has to offer and give all that we have to receive. (Sikh Mysticism, p. 23)

cannot have any hope of *Mukti*, Undoubtedly, a life of discipline, cultivation of virtue and elimination of vice, is the first step to salvation. But we must remember that the last and the effective step towards the goal is the love of the Name. Guru Nanak says in *Asa-di-Var*: "That is true knowledge when the thruth is in the heart, when the dirt of falsehood vanishes and life is pure and clean. That is true living when one fixes one's love on truth and finds joy in the hearing of the Name."

91. Need of Guru. Almost all the great religions of the world emphasis the need of a preceptor or Guru or holy man for the attainment of salvation. The Vedas enumerate the qualities of a religious guide. Even Guru Nanak emphasises that bliss can be obtained only through the grace of the Guru.

You can light your lamp from a lamp that is already lit up. Sikhism does not recognise either chosen prophets or chosen people. All Gurus are equal and off—shoots of God's light. Who is the real Guru? The real Guru is one who knows the Supreme Being. Guru Nanak did not insist on a physical Guru (Dehdari). His

own Guru was God Himself. The Guru gives light through his message. What is important is not the person but the word—"The word is the Guru. The Guru is the word If the devotee follows what the word says, surely the Guru will save him." That is why Guru Gobind Singh installed Sri Granth Sahib as Guru for all time. We do not need any man as Guru because the word is now with us. The Guru takes loving care of the disciple and guides him just as a father looks after his own children.\* He does not take into account the mistakes and follies of his children, but by persuasion and application, he removes their deficiencies and initiates them into the practice of the Holy Name.

But it is the only when we are ready that such a Guru will certainly come to us. Only when Bhai Lehna deserved the company of a true guide that Guru Nanak met him. By practising goodness in daily life, by doing our duties conscientiously, by thirst for God's Name, we become ready for the Guru whom God sends to us so that we may derive benefit from his guidance. His company is a source of inspiration

<sup>\*</sup>Bhai Gurcas: The custom of the world is to return good, for good, but the custom of the Guru is to return good for evil.

and transport. Just as sunlight destroys germs, in the same way the Guru takes away the dust-stains on our spiritual vestments. Guru Arjan says, "Without a Guru, liberation cannot be won. The Guru is my boat, which will ferry me across the rough ocean of existance."

92. Traits of a Guru. A Guru is not an incar tion of God. He is his trusted servant and messenger sent to the world to encourage righteousness and to uproot evil. The Guru never claims anything for himself. He always points unerringly and fearlessly to the everlasting reality-God-from whom men have turned their faces away. He comes in conflict with great social forces, vested interests and wicked men who are out to undo what he wants to do in the service of man. That is why the Guru has to face great hardship and undergo extreme sacrifice to vindicate what he holds as truth.

The Guru must appeal to the head and heart of members of all faiths and creeds because what he reveals is universal truth. Guru Nanak says, "The true Guru mixes freely with all." He should be able to divert sinful inclinations into pious inclinations. He should satisfy the yearning of the souls of his followers. He must lead an

exemplary life. He should be able to confer *Bhagti* and peace on seekers after truth. Guru Nanak says, "Such is the greatness of the Guru that salvation is obtained in the midst of wife and children."

The Guru not only inspires his disciple but also runs to his aid in any emergency or crisis. And yet his company and blessing must be deserved. The contact with a saint is the reward of past good actions. The seeker must have full faith in him, must serve him in all possible ways and must do his bidding; he must surrender his ego and abide by the Guru's word.

Above all, the Guru must be perfect in thought, word and deed. Guru Nanak says, Everybody else in subject to error, only the Guru and God are without error." Guru Arjan felt that the Guru must have seen the Invisible and must be capable of showing Him to his disciple: "He broods on God's Name at all times. Free from sin, joy and sorrow, the Guru welcomes everything that proceeds from the Almighty." Guru Nanak says, "The True Guru is intoxicated with the love of God. He is one with God. When one is fortunate, one meets a Guru. The

Guru destroys illusions and attachment to worldly objects."

93. The Guru in Sikhism. The Guru is a perfect man, and he can convert a human being into his like.

The Guru resides in the Sikh. It is this belief which makes a Sikh a superman. Guru Ramdas says, "The Guru is the Sikh and the Sikh who practices the Guru's word is equal to the Guru." Guru Gobind Singh says, "I live and have my being in the Khalsa." This feeling of being as great as the Guru keeps the Sikh not le and firm. It is this belief which has saved many a soul faced with temptation. Would his Guru do such a thing, is the question posed to a devout Sikh. He finds himself, so to say, filled up with the personality of the Guru.

Secondly, the Guru lives in the form of the *Panth*. He resides in the *Sangat*.\* It is the business of *Sangat* to engage in congregational prayers and to organise *Sewa*. Guru Nanak offered two things: the *Word* and holy fellowship (*Sangat*).

<sup>\*&#</sup>x27;The company of saints is the school of the true Guru, Where one learns the godly attributes.' (Adi Granth).

Every Sikh is to join some sangat, and thereby share in the communal personality of the Guru. Moreover, the Sikh Gurus had one and the same personality though they appeared in ten forms. All the Gurus are identical with Nanak. Guru Gobind Singh passed on the corporal succession to the Panth, which is regarded as the embodiment of the Guru. The Word (Guru Granth Sahib) became, what Teja Singh calls, 'Gian Guru.' The panth represents the Guru and it is progressing. With the passage of time, the panth is evolving. It is a dynamic and corporate personality with authority to make decisions (Gurmatas) binding on the Sikhs. In this way, there is a two-fold concept of Guru-dom, one permanent, the other progressive. The Word is the embodiment of eternal and changless truth, while the Panth is the progressive, collective personality of the Guru in Sikhs

94. The Living Guru. It has been observed that as soon as the founder of a faith is dead, rivalry among disciples leads to schisms and consequent challenging of beliefs and principles. This is not possible in Sikhism, because Guru Nanak in the Ten Forms taught the doctrine for 240 years and consecrated Adi Granth Sahib as

the Guru, Guru Granth Sahib is the living embodiment of the Ten Gurus. The Word now became the light and the living spirit. The Granth Sahib is the living flame of the Name, which lights the lamp of the disciple. sublimity of Gurudom has saved Sikhism from splintering into rival sects. The fundamental truth remains the same for all time. There is no place for a living Guru in the Sikh religion. bacause Gurbani is Guru and Guru is Gurbani.\* After all, what the Guru does is to guide the disciple by means of words, in the same way Guru Granth Sahib guides the Sikh through its songmessage. When a Sikh is in doubt about any principle of Sikhism, he refers the matter to the Panth for decision. The Guru should be always by the side of the disciple, or at any rate, easily accessible. The living Guru can never be always accessible. We may take Guru Granth Sahib wherever we like. It has been observed that certain devout Sikhs take Guru Granth Sahih with themselves even while proceeding on short tours or flying visits to different places.

95. Reading of Scriptures. Many good

<sup>\*</sup>Guru is not a person but the word:

<sup>&#</sup>x27;The word is the Guru, the Guru is the word, For all nectars are enshrined in the word.'

thoughts and noble sayings are found in sacred books but mere reading cannot help much. It is only the first step. Guru Nanak says:

"If a man reads books throughout his whole life, till breath leaves his body, only the Holv Name is valuable, all else is vanity of the self."\* Again, "the scholar is an idiot if he has greed, avarice and pride." What is important is the practice of the Name and the cultivation of virtue. An ounce of practice is preferable to a ton of knowledge. Ethics and laws tell us what to believe and what to do; they are like signposts. But one has to do the walking oneself. One cannot reach God by books or by rituals. Scriptures are our guides for action. They cannot fill the disciple with divine love. The knowledge of Vedas does not bring liberation: "God is beyond the Vedas, beyond the holy books." He can be found within the self by digging inward.

96. The doctrine of Grace. Man's spiritual efforts however sincere and noble are not enough for reaching the goal. By a life of dedicated action and by modelling his life on the qualities of God, and believing in the will of God, and constantly soliciting his aid in the spiritual endeavour,

<sup>\*</sup>Asa-di-Var : Pauri 9.

the devotee may be able to win God's grace. Austerities and penances, meditation and service are merely aids to the meriting of His Grace. Guru Nanak says:

If it please God, man crosses the terrible ocean.

We must empty ourselves of all desires and wait in trust for his favour. Kabir says:

I am a dog at God's door, my name is Moti. I go wherever my Lord pulls my Collar-Chain.

Elsewhere, Guru Nanak tells us that God has chosen him as a bride out of a large number. This is the reward for the qualities of the bride—humility, loyalty, sweet words—which have won for her the grace of the Lord. Surrender to God is the highest virtue of freedom.\* Just as a faithful wife gets the utmost pleasure in her complete surrender to her good husband, in the same way, the devotee gets supreme bliss by surrendering himself to God. Self-surrender to God means the absence of earthly cravings and desires.

The doctrine of grace is not to be interpreted as one of special election or arbitrary choice, because God is fair to all beings. Sikhism rejects the notion of chosen prophets and chosen

<sup>\*&#</sup>x27;For by grace are ye saved through faith.' (Bible).

disciples. God does injustice to no one, nor does he keep away from one the reward one deserves for one's actions.

Grace comes naturally and easily through meditation. Nam creates a feeling of the realisation of God's grace within oneself. This feeling of harmony ultimately results in the utterer becoming one with the Utterred.

97. Grace and Karma. The modification of Karma by grace is an essential principle of Sikhism. Guru Nanak says:

Karma is the cause of birth in this world, But salvation can be obtained by His Grace.

Undoubtedly, bad or uncharitable actions can not win grace. Good actions win not only public approbation but also divine favour. God controls *Karma* but He has given us both the understanding and the choice. In daily life, we get sufficient opportunity and free-will to avoid evil and to do what is good. Those who do evil are punished and go through many births and deaths. God does not interfere with man's choice, though as the Ruler of the universe, he controls the overall destiny of individuals. Just as the prodigal son, after a life of waste and shame returns to the

father, in the same way, the individual, after suffering for evil, turns to the good. Stories of sinners like Ajaamal and Koda Raksha suggest that even the wicked have a chance of salvation. Man has the power to sow action and reap action, but God has the privilege of the grant of Grace to those whom he regards fit for this favour.

98. Caste and Sikhism. Sikhism does not inculcate belief in caste. No man is born great or low. Guru Amardas says, "All colours and forms are thine." Guru Arjan gives the simile of the potter. The clay has been moulded in different forms.\* All men are the vessels of God. People may follow different faiths or divide themselves under different labels, but essentially man is one and indivisible. The excellence of a religion lies, in its precepts for the reformation of man. Whoever meditates on God becomes as great as He. Look at Ravidas the cobbler, Sadhna the butcher, Saina the barber. They were raised to the pedestal of saintliness and honoured by all.

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth:

<sup>&#</sup>x27;The world is made out of one clay,

But the potter fashioned it into vessels of many sorts. The body is formed by the union of five elements, Consider, if any one hath more or less in his composition.

Just as the philosopher's stone transmutes iron ore into gold, in the same way God's name changes a low-born person into a Bhagat. God's name cleanses and purifies. It burns away all impurity. When Guru Nanak was asked about persons of low caste, he said, "They alone are of low birth who forget the true Master and live without the grace of His Name. Their status is low; there is no other distinction." About his caste, Guru Nanak said, "I am a ministrel of low caste." Those who worship the Lord become holy. A person of high caste is worse than one of the lowest caste if he does not meditate on the Name. The Name of God elevates and purifies the evil ones. Moreover, caste is of no consequence in the next world.\* In God's Court, men shall be judged by their thoughts and deeds, and not by their family or pedigree. Kabir ridicules the idea of caste: "Tell me, O Pandit, when did you become a Brahmin? Were you not born in the same way as any other man?" Guru Nanak also rejects caste: "Caste is non-sense; sur-name

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth:

<sup>&#</sup>x27;Caste and beauty do not accompany man after death. He will be death with according to his actions here.'

is another absurdity."\* The Guru brought the four castes under one banner. And yet he taught us to be humble and poor in spirit, because without it, we cannot sublimate egoism (haumai). There is nothing like serving the poor and the low as this shows real brotherliness and love of God.

99. Place of miracles. Science and religion are not at loggerheads. Mr. Holmes a great scholar says, "As knowledge advances, science ceases to scoff at religion and religion ceases to frown on science." Both of them have one and the same objective, namely the good of humanity. While science works objectively, religion works subjectively. Moreover, science is still in its infancy. It has not yet explored many secrets of the universe.

A miracle is an extraordinary event which reason or science cannot explain. Science has

<sup>\*</sup>Guru Nanak challanged the Hindu caste-system which had then become a part of religion. A Hindu belonging to a low caste was not regarded as worthy of religion. Orthodox Hinduism believed that a man must remain in the station of life to which he had been born and he was not allowed to change it. This was against the Guru's basic belief in the right of the individual to social and spiritual uplift.

not yet advanced so far as to explain everything. Miracles are "not happening against the laws of God, but are the result of superior powers which He bestows on His servants."\* Men of God are able to achieve things which are at present beyond the comprehension of the scientist's limited reason.

Saints and prophets should not perform miracles to confirm the faith of people in them. Miracles should not be worked to prove the greatness or truth of a religion. In fact, it is a hindrance in the spiritual path.\*\* Guru Amardas says, "The desire to perform miracles is a worldly attachment and is an obstacle in the way of the Name residing in our hearts." Guru Nanak had no taste for miracle. The greatest miracle was not to perform a miracle, inspite of his capacity to do so. He said:

If I exercise supernatural powers And can create wealth at pleasure,

(Bhagvadgita, p. 58).

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth: Occult powers are attained by concentration on the Name. (Sukhmani).

<sup>\*\*</sup>Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: The aspirant for spiritual life is warned about the attraction of supernatural powers. They are spiritually meaningless and irrelevant.

Can appear and disappear at will, And thus win popular respect, These delude fools only, Who have no God in their hearts.

When the Sidhs asked Guru Nanak to show them a miracle, he replied that he would not do so: "Except the True Name, I have no miracle."\* Guru Arjan and Guru Teg Bahadur underwent tortures but refused to perform miracles. Men of God do not like to engage in such tricks. The true devotee will never use such powers. Is it sensible to kill a mosquito with an atom-bomb? Sikhism believes in the possibility of miracles but does not encourage their working. Guru Hargobind rebuked his son Baba Atal for exhibiting supernatural powers for which the latter had to pay with his own life.

100. Renunciation of the world. Leaving one's home and family and living away from people is not favoured in Sikhism. Guru Nanak remonstrated the Yogis and the Sidhs who lived in lonely and deserted places. The mind does not get peace in physical solitude. He writes in Sidh-Gosht:

<sup>\*</sup>According to Bhai Gurdas, Guru Nanak's two miracles were Sangat and Bani.

Even when one is far away from cities,
The mind wanders away in sleep;
Live by all means in society,
But covet not another man's wife,
Through His Name, one gets self-control.

The Gurus regarded married life (Grahsta) as the best mode of life. Escapism from the realities of life is not saintliness. The house-hold is a school where self-love is transformed into service of others and where the need to make an honest living leads to elevation of character.\* Guru Nanak pleaded for asceticism in the very vortex of life: "In the house-hold itself, there may be renunciation."\*\* If there is anything to be renounced, it is evil. Guru Arjan says:

Renunciation of lust, anger, attachment is praiseworthy.

Guru Gobind Singh described renunciation thus: "O my soul, practise renunciation in this way; consider your house as a forest and yourself

<sup>\*</sup>Mohan Singh Diwana: It is attachment with the Lord realised through attachment with the temporary relationship which are accepted in a spirit of detachment. Separation serves the purpose of union, is made to function as union. (Sikh Mysticism, p. 71).

<sup>\*\*</sup>S. Radhakrishnan: Renunciation means absence of desires and not cessation from work. (Bhagvadgita, p. 68)

as an ascetic in it. Let continence be your matted hair and communion with God your ablutions; instead of growing long nails pray daily; exert for acquiring divine knowledge; instead of rubbing ashes on the body repeat His Name."

There can be real renunciation (Sanyas) in daily life. Do not over-eat or over-sleep. Temperance and moderation prolong life. Practise peace and contentment. Let not the five vices tempt you. Stand firm against these foes. Seek God's help and it shall be given to you. Above all, regard yourself as a humble seeker of Truth. Remain in the world but be not attached to worldly things. Look at the lotus flower, it keeps its head above water. Guru Nanak says, "He who fixes the mind on God's feet, who remains desireless amid desires and is in love with the True One, is a real Sanvasi." Such a man is neither depressed by sorrow and misfortune nor elated by joy. He accepts happiness and sorrow with the same spirit.

Worldly duties must be done.\* Kabir,

<sup>\*</sup>The Gita: Unselfish performance of works is better than their renunciation (v. 2). Renunciation is a mental attitude, the casting off, of desire in work.

Ravidas, Dhana and Farid performed their daily round of duties and yet at the same time realised the presence of God. The true devotee dwells in the midst of worldly associations\* and yet he remains immersed in meditation, in the bliss of God's love, with the result that worldly afflictions seem to make no impression on him.\*\* The true renouncer does not wander in orangecoloured robes from house to house for alms. Guru Teg Bahadur says, "Why do you go to the jungles in search of Him? The All-pervading resides in the heart. As the fragrance resides in a flower and the image in a mirror, so the Lord resides inside; search for Him in your heart, brother!" The true Sikh follows the daily routine of a householder and yet keeps himself free from the attachments of the world.

## 101. Pilgrimage. According to Sikh religion,

<sup>\*</sup>A householder truly serves God by serving his fellowmen. His is a life of service—service to the family, to the community, to the nation and the world at large. He follows religion in the most practical way of living.

<sup>\*\*</sup>The Sikh doctrine of Activism implies that the head, the heart and the hand must work together for a lofty ideal:

<sup>&#</sup>x27;Utter the Name of the Lord with your lips, Do your daily duties with hands and feet, But concentrate on the Lord.'

pilgrimage confers no spiritual benefit. Guru Nanak says, "Pilgrimage does not have the value of even a mustard seed." Kabir was a resident of Benaras, a holy city, and yet he left for Magahar, because he felt that there was no benefit in living in a city where people came for pilgrimage. He says:

If a man with adamant heart dies in Benaras, He cannot escape hell; The man of God dying in Haramba, Saves a large host of people.

People go to pilgrimage for show. Some people commit sins at holy shrines. How can this be regarded as good? At places of pilgrimage people take bath in holy rivers or tanks. But outward washing does not cleanse the mind. Guru Nanak says:

Why wash the body from outside? Wash the mind, Clean it of the dirt of desire, And tread the path of salvation."

Bhai Amardas, before he became Guru went to places of pilgrimage twenty times, but got no light till he met Guru Angad. Guru Arjan says in Sukhmani, "Outward knowledge, meditation and baths are of no avail, if the dog of avarice resides inside."

Seek God in the temple of your mind. He is there waiting for your earnest call. It is no use following the formality of pilgrimage. Kabir says:

I was going on a pilgrimage to Kaaba; When the Lord met on the way, The Lord began to rebuke me: Who has commanded you to do such acts'?

All Gurus have tried to remove the wrong notion of the efficacy of pilgrimage. Guru Nanak says, "I would like to go to pilgrimage only if it pleased Him." Again he says, "My places of pilgrimage are the *Word*, contemplation and divine knowledge within me."

102. Fasting. Sikhism does not regard fasting as an act of religious merit. In the days of Guru Nanak, fasting had become a formality. It was regarded by the laity as an act of spirituality. Fasting, in order to overcome disease or abnormality, is perfectly legimitate. But fasting as an austerity and ritual is hateful. Guru Nanak says, "Penance, fasting, austerity, alms-giving are inferior to truth: right action is superior to them

all" To affirm that spirituality depends on the quality or quantity of food is absurd. One must take normal food. If a man cannot take it, there is something wrong with him. But to fast for the sake of fasting is futile. According to Guru Nanak, true fasting means the renunciation of the fruit of our actions.

102A. The Sword in Sikhism. Very many people question the need of Kirpan or the sword in the atomic age. Others require an explanation for the wearing of the sword. How can sword he reconciled with spirituality? Even before Guru Gobind Singh, his grand father Guru Hardgobind had donned the sword as a twin-symbol of temporal and spiritual power. He had maintained an army and taken part in military operations against the Mogul forces.

Guru Gobind Singh justified the use of the sword as a duty and as a means of protecting the weak and the oppressed. With human brutes, non-violence is meaningless, Guru Gobind Singh says:

When the affairs are past other remedies, It is justifiable to unsheath the sword.

In cases of brute force, violence has to be met by violence. Tyrants are like mad dogs and

wolves. They should be opposed in the interests of the good of humanity as a whole.

The sword is neither to be used for conquest nor for wreaking vengeance. The sword is meant only for self-defence or for the good of the people. In cases of injustice and intolerance, the refusal to use the sword may do more harm than good. Even Gandhi ji justified the use of violence for a high purpose. He permitted the use of the Indian army in the Police action against Hyderabad State and against the tribal raid on Kashmir Valley in 1947.

The Sikh's sword is not an instrument of offence but a symbol of independence, self-respect and power. Guru Gobind Singh called it *Durga* or *Bhagwati* and praises it thus:

Sword that smites in a flash,
That scatters the armies of the wicked
In the great battle-field,
O symbol of the brave.
Your arm is irresistible, your brightness shines
forth

The splendour of the black dazzies like the sun. Sword, you are the scourge of saints, You are the scourge of the wicked; Scatterer of sinners, I take refuge with you.

Hail to the Creator. Saviour and sustainer, Hail to you: Sword supreme!

103. Maya. Maya has been defined in various ways.\* According to some, this world is Maya an illusion. According to Sikhism, the universe, being the creation of the Supreme Being, is the temple of Divinity. It is as embodiment of His Eternal Truth\*\*. The world is subject to the

(Bhagvadgita, p. 42)

'That is Maya, which makes one forget the Lord, Produces attachment and creates duality.'

Maya is something negative like ignorance or darkness.

<sup>\*</sup>Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: Maya is derived from the root, maa, to form, to build, and originally meant the capacity to produce forms. Through the forces of maya, we have a bewildering partial consciousness which loses sight of reality and lives in the world of phenomenon. God's real being is veiled by the play of Prakriti and its modes. This world is said to be deceptive, because God hides Himself behind His creation. The glamour of the world casts its spell on us and we become slaves to its prizes. As the manifested world hides the real from the vision of mortals, it is said to be delusive in character.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Maya also stands for matter which is composed of three gunas called Rajo (Activity or Passion), Sato (Balance or Goodness), Tamo (Inertia or Dullness). Guru Arjan defines Maya thus:

Divine Will; it has no independent existence of its own. In that sense, it is unreal or illusory; it is subject to decay: "The universe is insubstantial as a shadow, fleeting like a dream, short-lived as a bubble," as compared with the Creator, the Eternal Truth, The Guru writes:

In a thousand water-pots There is one sky reflected, When the water-pots burst, The sky remains as before.

Man is caught with the infatuation of desire.\*
This lure of worldliness makes him regard worldly things as the goal of human life.

The root of Maya is egoism. It is this egoism which causes pain and rebirth. Man becomes a slave of the self. Guru Nanak says, "Man loves the self in infinite varieties of ways, by attachment to relatives, desire to accumulate wealth, and ambition to become powerful and great. The soul of man thus forges fetters which hold him to the earth. Man exalts matter above spirit. It is only when the illusions of Maya fade, and obsess the mind no more, that truth is realised and the soul of man finds refuge in God." Elsewhere he

<sup>\*</sup>Maya includes wealth, woman, high position, scholar-ship and occult power.

says, "As long as our faces are turned away from God, the shadows of Maya precede us, but as soon as we turn our faces towards God, the shadows disapper." When God rules within, egoism and sin vanish, and man becomes one with Him.

- 104. Process of Purification. Progress implies the purification of body, life and mind. When the mirror is cleaned up, it gives a clear reflection. The dust of the mind has to be wiped clean to see the real self. The process of purification is a difficult and exacting task as mentioned below:
- (a) The five sins of lust, anger, greed, attachment and pride have to be replaced by their virtuous counterparts. Self-control is to replace passion; forgiveness must replace anger, contentment must keep greed under check, love of God must displace attachment humility must keep pride out. Guru Nanak says, "The mind left to itself seeks evil. With the word of the Guru, the mind is kept in check." The redirection of the mind to path of virtue requires patience and perseverence.

Disciplined life facilitates spiritual effort. Guru Nanak says:

Life without virtue runs to waste.\*

(b) The disciple must submit willingly to the Divine Will. When he surrenders himself to God, He takes up his knowledge and his error and transforms all into His Infinite and the purity of the Universal Good. When he is emplied of his self, God takes possession of him. The true devotee like the young ape clings fast to the mother and is saved. Such a man, even while performing action becomes a real servant of God by walking in the light of His commands. He becomes the realised self. Guru Angad says:

'Having realised the will of God.

He is accepted by the Lord

Like lotus on the water

He floats on the sea of Maya,

Just as a swan floats on water

Without wetting its wings,

He lives and yet his self lives not.\*\*\*

This spirit of submission not only makes him feel humble, but also gives him a sense of

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth : Asa-di-Var.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Adi Granth: Var Manjh, II.

satisfaction and peace. He will take up the service of fellowmen as a primary duty: He who serves self-lessly attains the Lord.\* The emphasis on Sewa, that is voluntary service of others, is another way of serving God. Service of humanity is the indirect worship of God. This service is of three kinds, physical, mental and economic. Physical service means sweeping the place of worship or cooking or serving in the Guru's free-kitchen; mental service is enlightening others or concentration on the Name; economic service is sharing one's income with others, either by feeding them or giving donations for charitable and religious purposes.

(c) The most important instrument of purification is prayer, that is meditation on the Name. The devotee must fulfil his yearning for God by remembering Him at all times. One draws nearer to God by repearing His Name and dwelling on His great qualities. During prayer, one should not ask for wealth, position, power or a worldly object, as none of these help spiritual progress. Prayer builds up the attitude of sincerity and love. The flame of love once kiddled

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth: Sukhmani.

leads ultimately to union with the Supreme. By steadfast devotion, a disciple becomes one with God.

105. The concept of education in Sikhism. Sikhism includes a comprehensive system of selfeducation. After all, the purpose of education cannot be different from the purpose of life itself. The highest object of a man's life should be salvation and his life should be so arranged as to be an embodiment of *Dharma*. The function of education is to prepare the aesthetic and emotional back-ground in which the individual may get an opportunity for self-growth. Besides this, Dharma must inspire all the instruction and atmosphere in educational institutions. Dharma, we do no mean the tenets of a particular Creed, but a belief in certain basic things of life, for instance in the brotherhood of man and fatherhood of God, a reverence of teachers and elders, respect for all types of life, and an emphasis on duties rather than rights.

We are quite familiar with the three Rs. taught in schools. But there are in addition, three Hs, without which no education can be complete. It is the knowledge of the Hand, the knowledge

of the Head and the knowledge of the Heart. The education of the Hand means the realization of the dignity of labour and the readiness of the individual to earn his living with manual work. It also includes the service of humanity with the hand. Guru Nanak says:

Those who earn their living By the sweat of their brows, And give it to the needy Are the people who know, The path of Truth and Virtue.

Education does not imply the acquisition of powers to rule over others or to exploit their simplicity or backwardness for selfish ends.

The education of the Head means the intellectual perception of the laws of nature and the laws of humanity. This type of comprehension of truth is called Gyan. The human body is a delicate mechanism. The senses bring sensations or preceptions to the mind and it is for the mind to understand and to interpret the nature and purpose of the Divine Plan. The appreciation of the wonders of Nature and the understanding of the so-called mysteries of the universe is the purpose of the education of the Head.

The education of the Heart implies digging within for mystic experience. Guru Nanak says, "Search your heart, the Lord is there." A fuller account of this aspect of training will be found in *Patti* and *Dakhni Oankar*.

Make knowledge your merchandise, Truth the horses you take to sell, Tie up virtues as your travelling expenses, Think not in your heart of the morrow, When you reach the land of your love, You shall obtain endless joy.

The knowledge of the heart brings virtue, love and joy in its train. The true devotee emanates peace and joy. He belongs to the land of bliss, where sorrow is unknown.

Guru Nanak was a true educationist. He taught the *Pandit* and the *Mullah* the significance of life. The letters of the alphabet meant so much to him *Alif* means *Allah*. Sassah stands for service of man. His scheme of education not only provides training in character-building and citizenship, but also true wisdom: "The essence of wisdom is the service of humanity." Books do not give wisdom. They are like manures which may help the process of cultivation, but by themselves cannot produce

anything. It is *Dharma* which enables one to do one's duties and to realise the presence of God. Surrender to *Hukum* or the will of God is another aspect of self-realisation. Man's reason is imperfect. It is therefore beneficial for man to abide by the Divine will. Guru Nanak gave a practical demonstration of this system of education by training his successor Sri Guru Angad Sahib. It was the training of the disciple through discipline. Man is to merge with the higher self, with Beauty. Truth and Goodness. This makes education both creative and purposeful.

of the individual with the Universal on the psychic plane is called *liv*. The man of God does not renounce the world.\* He lives in it and performs all his duties as a householder. But he does not feel attached to worldly desire. The sense of selfishness is lost and everything appears as a work of divine wisdom. It is *liv* which enables the individual to remain unaffected by Maya. Namdev is one of his hymns says,

<sup>\*</sup>Dr. S. Radhakrishnan: Liberation is not the isolation of the immortal spirit from the mortal human life, but is the transfiguration of the whole man.

"Just as a boy flying a kite talks to his companions but his mind is centred on the kite and thread, just as the villages belle carrying a waterpitcher on her head walks with her friends, but keeps her mind centred on the pitcher, just as the cow while grazing on the field does not forget her calf, just as a woman cooking food thinks of the child left in the cradle, in the same way the man of God is apparently busy in doing worldly duties but his mind is concentrated on the Name." This union on the psychic plane surrounds the devotee with a mystic halo. The apparent attachment of the mind with the world is lost; the mind remains in constant communion with Divinity.\* Such a man meditates or does good naturally and automatically. In tune with the Infinite, the individual soul feels no pain or sorrow. It is one with God.\*\*

Guru Arjan has mentioned five aspects of the actual experience of the union of the individual soul with the Universal Soul. Firstly, the

<sup>\*</sup>This stage is called Sahaj or Turiya according to Sikh religion.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Adi Granth:

<sup>&</sup>quot;The ray hath merged in the sun, the wave in the sea. The light hath merged in the light and man is fulfilled."

darkness of ignorance disappears and the individual realises the wonder of God's universe. Secondly, there is an inner illumination, a kind of revelation—an enlightenment, not of the intellect but of mystic exaltation. Thirdly, the individual gains equipoise, a state of indefinable peace and confidence, coming from the loss of the ego. This sense of tranquillity—shanti—is due to the identification of the self with Divinity. Fourthly, the individual begins to love the entire humanity and is filled with a great longing for the service of his fellow-men. Fifthly, the individual realises everything as emanating from God. His soul which had emanated from God is united with the Ultimate Source.

107. The True Yogi. The word Yoga comes from the Sanskrit root, Yuj, which means to yoke or join together. So Yoga means the union of the individual self with the Universal Self.

A true yogi is not one who leaves his family and home, and wanders all over the country. While writing letters and cheking accounts, the real devotee thinks of God. A true yogi finds

renunciation in the house itself.\* He does not regard the house as his own but of the Lord. He renounces egoism. He understands that he has a soul. The true yogi is a friend of all; he is a servant of servants. He fixes his mind on God and remains desireless in the world.\*\* He remains indifferent to sorrow and happiness. He is free from cares, because he loves the only one God, Guru Nanak defines a Yogi thus:

They live in the world, ever detached from it;
They anoint themselves with the dust of saints' feet,
Forgiveness and charity is their garb of poverty,
Love is their begging bowl;
They live in devotion to God.
With their mind absorbed in the Divine Name,
They blow the born of inner music;
Knowledge and contemplation is their staff.
The holy congregation is the cave,
Where they sit and meditate.
Thus they attain Sahaj samadhi,
A state of union with the unfathomable spirit.

They are free from all egoism.

They are free from joys and sorrows of birth and death.

<sup>\*</sup>Bhai Gurdas describes Sikh Yogis thus:

<sup>\*\*</sup>Sikh Review (March 1964): Guru Angad explained the Sahaj Yoga of Guru Nanak to Daya Nath Yogi at Khandur (p. 4)

"He who controls the five senses, And does not waver, He attains the way of Yoga, Such a disciple gets the light, He remains absorbed in Him."

"Yoga" in Sikhism means the remembrance of the Name. Guru Nanak uses the word Sangam—the confluence of two streams—for yoga. He says, I enjoy my confluence with my Lord Prabh Sangam Rati. The Sikh thinks of the omnipresent God. He never thinks of austerities or rituals, or penances. He remains intoxicated with divine bliss. The Name of God is the real exilir. It revitalises the body, mind and soul. It purges the individual of five sins and three elements -Rajo, Sato, Tamo—and makes him feel buoyant and Guru-like.

Guru Nanak rebuked the yogis for going to the houses of laity for begging. He denounced parasitism and recommended renunciation of desire and attachment in the midst of temporal life through the discipline of the Name.

"With the Word of God enthroned in the heart and soul,
The seeker has to put on a garb of charity and forgiveness,

And sweet humility in his dealings with his fellow-men.

Whatever happens to him, he regards as the doing of the Creator,

And bows before His Will, for he knows and feels,

That all He does is good and for good.

This is Sahaj Yoga, the natural union with Divinity,

Whose fruit is everlasting peace and bliss.

108. The Duties of the Khalsa. In one of his poems, Guru Gobind Singh defines the Khalsa:

"He who repeats night and day the name of Him,

Who has full love and confidence in God,

Who bestows not a thought on any but one God,

Whose enduring light is inextinguishable,

Who puts no faith in fasting and worshipping cemeteries and monasteries,

Who only recognises the one God and makes no fetish,

Of pilgrimages, alms, charities and austerities: He is recognised as a true member of the Khalsa, In whose heart the light of the Perfect One shines."

Guru Gobind Singh laid down the following duties for the Khalsa:

- I. The Khalsa is to worship one God and read *Nitname* (Five *Banis*) and daily meditate on the *Name*.
- II. He is to keep the symbols (Panj Kakar) and to lead his life according to the Guru's teaching. Gurmantra is Waheguru and the Basic creed is Mool-mantra.
- III. He has no caste after joining the brotherhood; he has to repudiate non-Sikh rites and ceremonies, and follow only Sikh practices.
- IV. He is not to commit 'any of the four misdeeds (*Kurahat*) namely, the shaving or cutting of hair, eating *Halal* meat, adultery and the use of tobacco or any other intoxicant.
- V. He is not to commit any of the social offences (Tankhah), such as giving dowry, using liquors and intoxicants, raising monuments over graves and associating with apostates.

- VI. He must contribute one-tenth (daswand) of his income for religious purposes.
- VII. He is to serve the sangat in all ways.
- VIII. He must practice arms and be ready to defend the weak.

The Khalsa was a saint-soldier wedded to the two-fold ideal of *Bhagti* and *Shakti*. He was to combine self-respect with humility. The Guru was extremely pleased with this type of super-man that he had helped to evolve. He was a sort of universal man of God, countryless and casteless. Here the best of the character of the past and the persent were merged together to create a man of the future, the noble *Khalsa*. The Khalsa Brotherhood is not open to weaklings or the fickle-minded. The hard and persistent discipline requires a man of strong character and integrity.

Guru Gobind Singh though a creator of the Khalsa regarded himself as their servant. He says, "To serve them pleases me the most; no other service is so dear to my soul." Like a loving father, he was prepared to forgive the sudden lapses of the Khalsa as in the case of the "Forty Immortals", whom he claimed as his own in the nick of time. The Khalsa was given a position equal to that of the Guru. The Guru

consists of two parts: the body and the Name. The Guru nominated the Khalsa, as his body and Guru Granth Sahib as the embodiment the Name. That is why we use the title of Guru-Khalsa. The Guru acknowledged his debt to the Khalsa in one of his verses.

"It is through them that I have gained experience; with their help I have subdued my enemies. Through their favour, I am exalted, otherwise there are millions of ordinary humble men like me."

Meaning of Symbols. Symbols or outward signs are a mode of discipline. A person who enters the Panth (Khalsa Community) will gladly embrace all its tenets and symbols. Symbols test the disciple's firmness and strengh of faith. They indicate the type of character the wearer should have. He must be proud of being a Sikh, even though it may cost him his life. Secondly this common appearance and uniform ensures easy recognition. One can easily spot a Khalsa in a crowd. Lastly a common uniform fosters brother-hood and a sense of unity in the community. These forms were prescribed to preserve the corporate life of the community and to remind the Sikh to play his part as a unit of

the Panth. Each symbol has its own use and psychological significance.

The significance of Symbols—Panj Kakar—is given below:

- I. Underwear (Kachha) ensures agility and briskness. It is a mark of perpetual readiness. It also stands for chastity.
- II. Wrist-band (Kara) is a sign of restraint and bondage. It indicates that one is a devotee of the Guru. A look at the wrist-band will bring shame to a Sikh when he does any misdeed.
- III. Sword (Kirpan) is an emblem of power and courage. It is to be used primarily as an instrument of defence. The Khalsa is not only a brotherhood of faith but also a brotherhood of arms.
- IV. Unshorn Hair (Kes) is an emblem of the saints and Rishis of the past. It is a mark of dedication and group-consciousness.\*

(The Sikh Courier, London, July, 1964)

<sup>\*</sup>P.M. Wylam: If the Sikhs in the Western countries stick to their retention of the Keshas—since long hair is a strict condition of their religion—there is no doubt that the turban and beared will come to be recognised and respected as a sign of integrity and trust-worthiness.

V. Comb (Kanga) is necessary to keep the hair clean and in shape. The hair make a Khalsa look exactly like Guru Gobind Singh and enable him to behave exactly like the Guru. Guru Gobind Singh says. "The Khalsa is my special form; I live in the embodiment of the Khalsa. The Khalsa is a part and parcel of my body: the Khalsa is my very soul."

Gobind Singh gave oral instructions to the Khalsa from time to time which were later reduced to writing and called Rahat names (codes of conduct). The most important of the Rahat namas are those of Bhai Daya Singh, (son of Bhai Mani Singh), Bhai Chaupa Singh and Bhai Nand Lal. In addition, we have more instructions addressed to Bhai Nand Lal which are called Tankhah-nama. The main points of these codes of conduct are given below:

#### I. RAHATNAMA OF BHAI DAYA SINGH

(i) A Sikh should not do any ascetic practices of yogis, sanyasis and should not engage in Tantra, Mantra and Jantra.

- (ii) A Sikh should solemnise his marriage and those of his children according to Anand wedding.
- (iii) A Sikh should not give his daugher in marriage to a *Patit* (apostate).
- (iv) A Sikh should not have any faith in Brahamanical, Vaishnava of Shiva deities.

#### II. RAHATNAMA OF BHAI DESA SINGH

- (i) A Sikh should give one-tenth of his income to religious and charitable causes.
- (ii) He Should keep aloof from characterless men and women.
- (iii) He should not use money from temple offerings or charitable funds. If he is a priest or Granthi, he should take only what is necessary for his needs.
- (iv) He should disassociate himself from *Patits* (apostates).

#### III. RAHATNAMA OF BHAI CHAUPA SINGH

- (i) A Sikh should marry among Sikh families.
- (ii) A Sikh should teach his son how to read and understand Guru Granth Sabib.
- (iii) A Sikh should not dye his hair or beard.
- (iv) A Sikh should not break his vow or promise or commit perjury or treachery.

(v) A Sikh should always use the Sikh greeting: "Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh."

#### IV. RAHATNAMA OF BHAI NANDLAL

- (i) A Sikh should comb his hair twice daily and tie his turban afresh every time.
- (ii) A Sikh should not listen to vulgar and profane songs.
- (iii) A Sikh should cover his head while going out, and while he is taking food.

#### RAHAT-MARYADA

The following instructions have been issued by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Amritsar, in their publication on Rahat-Maryada.

A Sikh should live and work according to the principles of Sikhism, and should be guided by the following:

- (a) He should worship only one God and should not indulge in any form of idol worship.
- (b) Live a life based on the teachings of the ten Gurus, the Adi Granth, and other scriptures and teaching of the Gurus.
- (c) Sikhs should believe in the "oneness" of the

- ten Gurus. That is, that a single soul or entity existed in the lives of the ten Gurus.
- (d) A Sikh should have no dealings with caste, black magic, superstitious practices such as the seeking of auspicious moments, eclipses, the practice of feeding Brahmins in the belief that the food will go to one's ancestors, ancestor-worship, fasting at different phases of the moon, the wearing of sacred threads and similar rituals.
- (e) The Gurdwara should serve as the Sikh's central place of worship. Although the Adi Granth is the central of Sikh belief, non-Sikh books can be studied for general enlightenment.
- (f) Sikhism should be distinct from other religions, but Sikhs must in no way give offence to other faiths.
- (g) Knowledge of Sikhism is highly desirable for a Sikh and this should be acquired in addition to his other education.
- (h) It is the duty of Sikhs to teach Sikhism to their children.
  - (i) Sikhs should not cut their children's hair. Boys are to be given the name of Singh and girls the name Kaur.

- (j) Sikhs should not partake of alcohol, tobacco, drugs or other intoxicants.
- (k) Sikhism strongly condemns infanticide, particularly female infanticide.
  - (1) Sikh should only live on money that has been honestly earned.
- (m) No Sikh should gamble or commit theft.
- (n) Sikhs must not commit adultery.
- (o) A Sikh should respect another man's wife as he would his own mother; and another man's daughter as his own daughter.
- (p) A man should enjoy his wife's companionship, and women should be loyal to their husbands.
- (q) A Sikh should live his life from birth to death according to tenets of his faith.
  - (r) A Sikh should greet other Sikhs with the saluation "Waheguru ji ka Khalsa, Siri Waheguru ji ki fateh" (Hail Khalsa of the wonderful Lord who is always victorious).
  - (s) It is contrary to Sikhism for women to wear purda (veil).
  - (t) Any clothing may be worn by a Sikh provided it includes a turban (for males) and shorts or similar garment.

The above instruction can be easily categorised under two headings—religious and social. The religious prohibitions are in consonance with the Sikh traditions. The social commandments are more or less intended to make a Sikh a good citizen and responsible member of the community. Prohibition of theft, plunder, perjury treachery, cheating, gambling, exploitation of the poor, ban on association with evil men and women, misuse of religious offerings—all these go to smoothening the course of social life and benefit the community as a whole.

# CHAPTER VIII PRACTICAL RELIGION

sides to every religon, one philosophical (Sidhanta) and the other practial (Sadhana). The theoretical side explains the nature of God, universe and man. The practical path (Sadhana) indicates the mode of life which a man should lead for spiritual evolution. There are three kinds of the practical paths: Karam Yoga, Gyan Yoga, Bhagti Yoga.

The Karam Yoga is based on the theory that some action must be performed to please God.\* This action may be either positive or negative, doing certain things and omitting to do certain others. The pleasure of the deity is obtained by offering, say an animal or by a human action. Religion then becomes a sort of sacrificial ritual. There are certain other actions which are also regarded as essential, as for instrance daily bath,

(Bhagvadgita, p. 66)

<sup>\*</sup>S. Radhakrishnan: The Gita is a mandate for action. It explains what a man ought to do, not merely as a social being but as an individual with a spirit destiny.

prayer at particular 'times (Sandhya). As against Karam Yoga, the Sanyasi offers asceticism. Action is bondage and daily routine is sin. He believes in suppression of activities. This, he thinks, leads to purification of the individual.

The Gyan Yoga implies the realisation of God through knowledge.\* We must know the personal self and the Universal Self; from lower knowledge, we gradually go up to higher knowledge. We must put in the intellectual effort to understand philosophic truths.

The Bhagti Yoga implies the religion of love. But even this love of God ends in observances and ceremonies. The devotee worships the Lord, who is separate from the worshipper. Some saints or mystics practised a sort of inspired modness.

This implies realisation of God through emotional experience. Love and worship are of serving Him.

These systems are likely to have a reverse effect on account of weaknesses of their own.

<sup>\*</sup>Sankara says, 'Liberation is accomplished by wisdom, but wisdom does not spring without the purification of the heart.'

Karam Yoga leads to ostentation and hypocrisy, action for the sake of action, without any feeling. Ritual does not purify the heart or elevate the character of the worshipper. Action leads to egoism and the chain-reaction of effects. Moreover, by inflicting pain on the body, the heart cannot get purified; fasting does not bring man nearer to God. Gyan Yoga leads to extreme intellectualism and hair-splitting. Bhagti Marg leads to extreme emotionalism and to the feeling that God the worshipped is different from man the worshipper. Moreover, Bhagti leads to lipworship, mechanical repetition of certain mantras Bhagti often implies vegetarianism, non-violence and frustration.

The Guru insisted on a worldly life. Renounce worldliness and attachment and not the household. Life is a struggle against infinite odds. Action is necessary, but it must be done without attachment and in a spirit of dedication. The strength of the devotee lies in overcoming obstacles and not in running away from them. The man of God has courage and patience to face worldly trials with equanimity and balance.

110A. Service: Service is the natural

offshoot of the love of God. 'Love me, love my dog' is a popular proverb. So if you love God, you love His creation too. The Love of one's fellow-men is exemplified by acts of service. So service of humanity is a practical way in which the devotee expresses his love for God. Morever, service shows the oneness of life. God is present in every being and in everything. A God-conscious man serves another beacause he sees God in him. Just as God Himself is devoted to ministering to the needs of His creation, in the same way the true sikh devotes himself physically, mentally and conscientiously to the service of the people. The poor, the suffering, the downtrodden stand in dire need of help.

Morever, service purges man of evil qualities. Guru Arjan says, 'The servant of God is free from the evils of pride, attachment and greed, because he finds God in all'. Selfless service kills the ego. By service, humility and self-surrender are strengthened. The Gurus led a life of devoted service. Guru Arjan served the Sangat by fanning them in the hot season. Langar is another type of service. Bhai Lehna won the affection of Guru Nanak by selfless service.

Viewed from another angle, service is a kind of adoration of the almighty. The best service is the submission to the Will of God—to take all that comes from Him with equanimity and sweetness, Guru Arjan says:

By accepting and realising His Will. True happiness is attained.

To live in harmony with the Divine will brings everlasting peace. When we come to know His Will, there is no egoism. The Gurus recommended service as a lesson in humility and seflessness. So service is a means to an end, namely the development of spiritual life ultimately leading to the realisation of God.

111. Nam.\* The Guru's path may be called Nam Marg or Sahaj Yoga. Guru Nanak explains it thus:

Fill the mind with the word of the Guru, Put on the garments of forgivess, Submit to the will of God, Unmoved by pleasure and pain,

<sup>\*</sup>The word Nam is derived from the Sanskrit Name: which means practice of remembrance.

Thus the treasures of Sahaj Yoga are gathered."\*

There is nothing in the world to compare with Nam. Gurn Nanak says, "If I utter Nam, I live; if not, I die." The praise of Nam is found in the first canto of the Sukhmani. Life without Nam is barren and meaningless. The obstacles to the Name are worldly thoughts, sleep and desire for occult powers. This Nam is neither knowledge nor philosophy. Nam reveals the presence of God both in man and the universe. Nam performs three functions: it is purgative, that is, it removes our evils; it is illuminitive, it gives us the knowledge of Truth, Goodness and Beauty; it is unitive, that is, it brings about a merger of the individual into the supreme. Guru Arjan says:

\*The praising of the Name is the highest of all practices

It has uplifted many souls,
It slakes the desire of the restless mind
And it imparts an all—seeing vision.

(Sukhmani, 1, 4.)

<sup>\*</sup>The state of Sahaj means epuipoise. In this stage, there is natural and spontaneous realisation of God.

Some theologians think that Nam consists in the repetition of God's Name. The divine name has a great potency. This is born out by lives of many saints. According to the Sikh religion, mere lip-repetition of certain names is not Nam.\* The Guru denounced the rosary as sheer hypocrisy. What is the fun of uttering some mantra on the beads when the mind is wandering? Nam or Simaran cannot be defined, but we can know its concomitants,\*\* Nam produces Wismad, a feeling of wonder at God and His works. In this stage all inner resentments and rebellions are overcome and the emotions are spiritualised This is an emotional and psychic experience. It is an aesthetic appreciation of God's beautiful

<sup>\*</sup>Repetition of a formula or catch-word is not Nam; it is concentration on the meaning of a hymn or some idea about spiritual evolution. The Name has a special meaning in a particular context. If in a hymn, fear of death is depicted, the Name in that context means fearlessness; if in another hymn, greed is depicted, the Name there means charity or non-attachment to worldly possessions.

The Guru's word must sink into the soul and turn the habitual tide of the mind so that the soul experiences the nature of God within one's emotional Self.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Nam has a number of meanings. It stands for meditation on the Name or Word. It also means the All-pervading spirit.

creation. God is the beautiful gardener and the world is a fine garden. The charm, the colour and the music of Nature arouse the feeling of Wismad. Then the devotee thanks God for such wonders. The whole wolrd becomes an emanation of the Pure, the Good and the Beautiful. This experience of wonder can neither be defined nor explained. It is the experience of the aesthetic side of man bringing him close to the Power behind all such experience. The mundane artist divides things into the beautiful and the ugly. The Nami knows no such distinctions. All things are bright and beautiful. This feeling finds utterance in Waheguru (The Wonderful Lord).

S. Teja Singh writes, "To practise Nam means to practise the presence of God by keeping Him ever in our minds by singing His praises or dwelling on His excellences." This attitude is to be permanent. The Wismadi is one with the Lord. He is busy in wordly things and yet his mind is centred on Nam. The taste of the pudding lies in the eating, and not in the cookerybook. This statte of inner peace comes with God's grace.

The Guru's Nam Marg also includes doing honest labour (Kirt Karna) and sharing one's

earnings with others (Wand Chhakna), leading to individual and social welfare. So it is a complete design for living. Parasitism is not only antisocial but also anti-religious.

112. Love of the Name. Perfection or salvation is the goal of man's life. How can one the Perfect One? Guru Nanak says:

In the blessed hours of the morn,
Meditate on the grace of the True Name.
For, your good action may procure
For you a better birth.
But liberation comes from Grace alone.

How can one practise the Name? God is a Being who is capable of being loved and who is present in His creation; God dwells within man like fragrance in a flower. The way to know Him is to love Him. To love Him, one must love His creation, admire His wonders and meditate on His Name. One can serve God, by serving one's fellowmen. So true worship consists in doing good actions both for benefit of one-self and other people. Constant rememberance of His Name would keep one away from sin and worldly attachment. Guru Granth emphasises the goal of salvation and insists that it can be won by

leading a normal life. It means that it is possible for a worldly house-holder to merge with the Divine by following the Guru's word. The Guru says that it is easy for a man to cross the tempestuous ocean of the world by making God's Name the boat and putting the Word as the helmsman.

over again, the importance of the Name. Over and over again, the importance of the Nam or the Word is emphasissed in the Sikh scriptures. The taste of the pudding lies in the eating and not in the cookery-book. The state of inner peace which the Remembrance of the Name brings is known only to evolved souls. However, in Guru Granth Sahib, the Sikh Gurus have given some hints on the technique of the Name. This is a process of spiritual development attained with divine grace. Let us consider some of the important implications of Simaran—the art of the Remembrance of God.

<sup>\*</sup>Nam means name, that is, God's name. Secondly, Nam means God's creation. Nam also means the Remembrance of God's Name. Through His name alone we can enter His spirit and His presence. 'The word Nam has nearly the same significance in Sikh religion as Holy Ghost in the Christian Faith.' Jodh Singh: Lectures on Guru Granth Sahib, Benaras University, 1955, p. 84).

# (a) Lip Repetition.

Like a child learning the alphabet by rote, the beginner must start with repetition of the Sikh mantra—Waheguru,\* by vocal utterance. Guru Nanak regards this as the first step. He says:

Repetition of the Name by the tongue, Will eventually produce the nectar!\*\*

# (b) Percolation into the mind.

Concentration of the mind on the Name is quite important. In the beginning, the mind will wander away from the Name. By and by and with constant effort, the mind will learn to fix itself on the Name, which will gradually percolate into the inner consciousness or what we now call

<sup>\*</sup>Waheguru means, Hail the Holy light, dispeller of darkness. It stands for the wonderful Lord-God and His creation.

<sup>\*\*</sup>The benefit of Lip-Repetition is limited. Guru Arjan says, 'Men repeat the Name of God with their lips, but bliss comes when it fills their hearts.' Constant repetition of God's Name works as "a constant reminder of man's destination and operates as a constant insistence to relate our actions on the physical and mental plane to the spiritual objectives of life." You remember a thing you love. The more you remember it, the nearer it gets to you. Constant remembrance produces the bond of love and longing.

the subconscious. Guru Nanak says:

'The name will percolate within the heart and give it a feeling of stability.'

'The name of God is the real alchemic elixir, The Lord pulls us out of the mire with his own hands,

Catching hold of our arms, he fills all breaches for us.'

'In this heart's garden, plant like Seeds, The.Word of Guru

And water thy garden with love

And all thy orchards shall bear the precious fruitage of the Holy name of God.

Within your own body is the true pool of Immortality,

Let your mind drink the nectar there.

The Divine Name flowers only in a healthy soil. It can stay in the mind, if the mind is clean and spotless. This conscious meditation is called *Dhyan* or concentration. The object of concentrais neither an image nor any physical being. It is the Abstract, Timeless, Eternal God.

## (c) Longing.

Just as a lover waits patiently for a glance at his beloved, the devotee longs intensely for the divine vision. For the Guru, remembrance is life, forgetfulness is death. Guru Nanak says:

'If I remember him, I live. If I forget him, I die.' Just as the fish cannot live without water, the devotee cannot live without the Lord. Guru Nanak says:

'Listen my heart: Love God ceaselessly
As the fish loveth water:
The deeper the water,
The happier and more tranquil the fish.\*
'This is the greatest sickness of the soul
To forget even for a second, the Beloved.\*\*

Man is compared to a woman waiting for the pleasure of her husband.

The Lord is the spouse who on His Couch enjoyeth the love of the devotee.\*\*\*

Total self-surrender eliminates the spirit of egoism—haumai. The Name like the moon reflected in the water, brightens the inner spirit of man.

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth, p. 59.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Adi Granth, p. 21.

<sup>\*\*\*</sup>Adi Granth, p. 21.

'O, Nanak! Their faces are radiant And in their hearts is joy Born of the music of his Word.

# (d) Seeing God everywhere.

With his consciousness brightened by God's vision, the devotees see him here, there and everywhere.

'God is beyond the Vedas, the Holy Books, Nanak's God is actually visible.'

God is seen in His creation. The anchorite gets the third penetrating eye. He sees through the semblances the reality within. He sees God in animals, vegetables and even stones.\* Many Bhagats evolved from idol-workship to a realisation of the Unborn and the Timeless, Then the devotee feels that God is with him and he

<sup>\*</sup>The Sikh will become conscious of the working of God in all aspects of his life; the consciousness of His Presence will eventually become natural to him, so that even in the midst of pleasure or pain or all the activities of life, he will be aware of the goodness of God and the manifold blessings with which He endows the creatures of His Creation. (P. Wylam: An Introduction to Sikh Belief, p. 3).

need not wander to holy places or consecrated spots.

Guru Ramdas says:

'I search for the Friend, But my Friend is always with me.'

## (e) The Merger.

The goal of the Remembrance of the Name is merger of the individual soul in the Universal soul. The sense of duality vanishes and man feels in tune with the primeval source.

Guru Ramdas says:

The Lord's chosen are absorbed in the Lord's Name.

The pain of birth and fear of death are lost. They have attained the Imperishable Lord. Great honour is theirs in all regions.

This is the state of living immortality-Jivan Mukt. Such a man is free from the cycle of birth and death and is merged in the Infinite.

## (f) Precautions.

Just as medicine does not prove effective unless diet is controlled, in the same way Nam does not show its results without taking positive steps to make it grow in a congenial atmosphere.

The best time to practise the discipline of the Name is early dawn. Guru Nanak says in the Japji.

In the embrosial hours of the dawn, Repeat the True Name, and meditate on His Greatness.

This does not mean that during the other hours of the day, the Name is to be neglected. The Guru's commandment is that the Sikh must concentrate on the Name even while standing, walking or working.

The discipline of the Name is an uphill task. Many times, the mind wanders off in different directions. The devotee must bring his mind back to the Remembrance of the Name. Idleness and attachment are the two main hurdles in the constant meditation on the Name. The company of holy men or Sat Sang is an incentive to a career of devotion. Guru Arjan says in Sukhmani:

"He who taketh refuge at the feet of saints, Hath entered on the path of salvation.

It is essential that the life of a devotee should be simple and exemplary. Therefore he should remove the evil desires and try to do good actions. Guru Nanak says:

God grants salvation through good works and uprightness of conduct.

On the other hand, mere performance of good deeds leads nowhere, because it may produce or strengthen the sense of egoism in man. Good deeds in Sikhism take the from of acts of service (Sewa). Service frees man from pride, attachment and greed and teaches him now to submit to the will of God. The cultivation of virtue requires positive effort. With a high sense of morality, the devotee can be a model for others to follow. Just as a man sitting in the sun does not feel cold, the devotee under the protection of the Name does not feel the touch of the five cardinal sins. The sun is far away but His Name, which gives us solace and joy is with us.

The true Remembrance of the *Name* is a three-fold activity meditation with words, mind and actions. Sweet words, a pure mind an noble deeds translate the Name into a living Reality. But all this is possible only through divine grace. The devotee must solicit His aid in his spiritual endeavour. Guru Nanak says:

If it pleases God, man crosses the terrible ocean.

Grace comes to those who deserve it. The meditation leads to an ecstatic state when the individual loses himself in Divinity:

The self is merged in the greater self.
The little self is lost to view,
And is merged in boundles bliess,
It rises above self-consciousness.
No feeling there of I-am-ness
Nor of heaven, nor of earth.
Oneness only with the One
Wedlock of the Soul and God.

Guru Arjan describes the final stage of the devotee thus.

"As water mingles with water So the light merges in the light."

115. The Routine. Guru Ramdas has laid down the routine of the true Sikh. Let a true Sikh get up early in the morning and after bathing, meditate on the Divine Name. Let him, with all concentration, repeat the Name till sunrise. This will remove all his worries and sorrows. "Then let him go about his daily work to earn

his honest bread. The Sikh who repeats the Name incessantly is loved by the Guru. The The Guru seeks the dust of the feet of the Sikh who remembers God's name and persuades others to repeat the Name."\*

Guru Amardas gave the following hints when requested by Bhai Budha to detail the rules of daily conduct. Let the Sikh "serve good people and not touch money belonging to others. Let him share his joys and sorrows with his neighbours. Let him eat only when he is hungry and sleep when he feels sleepy. Let him, above all, not neglect the true Name. Let him resign himself to the will of God and never find fault with the doings of his Creater. Let him not entertain lust. anger or greed. Let him not parade his goodness. Let him never give up repetition of the Name. charity and personal cleanliness. Let him keep aloof from calumny of God and the Guru. Nothing can excel the company of the Guru and devotion to God. Let him mould his conduct according to the Guru's words."

116. Uplift of woman. The Gurus held woman in high esteem. So with the rise of

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth, p. 305.

Sikhism, woman gained in dignity and social Some ancient scriptures denounced woman as unworthy of teaching or religious exercises. Woman was regarded as evil and unclean. Guru Nanak challenged this view: Why should we treat woman with contempt and cruelty? A woman is not to be condemned on the ground of her sex.\* Woman is the equal of man in the estimation of evolved beings. So Sikhism conferred religious rights on woman. Religious gatherings and Kirtan were thrown open to women; they could participate on equal terms with men in temporal and secular observances. Bhai Gurdas. the veteran Sikh theologian affirmed: "Woman is man's other half, and as such, helps him in attaining to salvation." Guru Hargobind called woman "the conscience of

Of a woman we are conceived,
Of a woman we are born,
To a woman we are betrothed and married,
It is a woman who is a friend and partner of life,
It is a woman who keeps the race going,
Why should we consider women cursed and
condemned,

When from woman are born leaders and rulers.

(Rag Asa, I)

<sup>\*</sup>Adi Granth:

man." Sikh baptism (Amrit) is obligatory both for man and woman. The rules of conduct and the sphere of religious duties are identical both for man and woman. In religious meetings, men and women sing and lecture like equals.

Guru Amardas condemned the practice of widow-burning (Sati): He said, "They are not Satis who burn themselves with the dead bodis of their husbands. Those are real Satis who die of the mere shock of separation from their husbands." So the equality of sexes emphasised by Sikhism led to amelioration of the lot of woman. Men began to defend women's honour. Women also realised their important place in society and often stood up against tyranny and humiliation. The Stories of Sundri and Satwant Kaur written by Bhai Vir Singh show the way in which Skih women were respectedly treated by the Khalsa Panth.

#### CHAPTER IX

# SIKH CEREMONIES

117. The Naming Ceremony. At the birth of a child, a drop of honey or sweetened water placed on the tip of a kirpan and over which the Mul Mantra has been read is put into the mouth of the new born. Then a prayer is offered.

When the mother of the child is fit for going out, she goes to a Gurdwara with her friends and relations. Hymns are sung and sometimes Bhog of Path is recited. After this, a passage is read from Guru Granth Sahib and the first letter of the Shabad is regarded as a key-letter and the congregation is asked to suggest a suitable name beginning with that letter. The name is approved and announced with a Jaikara (Bolay So Nihal Sat Sri Akal). The suffix "Singh" is added to a boy's name and "Kaur" to a girl's name. Then Karah Parsad is distributed to all present.

118. Sikh Baptism. The Amrit ceremony can be held in a house or in a Gurdwara. The Holy Book is opened. Then five Khalsa (Panch Piyara) who should have all the five symbols intact sit in

front of the Holy Book. The recipients should have taken bath and must have clean clothes on them. They stand up with folded hands. If one who has already been baptised desires to take Amrit again, he should confess his sin or Kurahit to the Panch piyara and undergo the penalty imposed on him before he can join the rest for Amrit. Then one of the blessed five tells them about the priciples of the Khalsa and asks them whether they accept them. After the recipients have given their assent, one of five offers a prayer for the preparation of Amrit. Then the five sit in a circle for preparation of Amrit. They place an iron vessel in the centre with some water and some sugar-pellets (Patasa) in it. One by one, they recite the Japji, Jap Sahab, Ten Swayyas, Chaupai and Anand Sahib stirring water with the sword. Then the five stand up and offer a prayer. The Amrit is now ready for distribution. Each candidate is then called for receiving Amrit. He makes a cup of his hands and drinks five handfuls uttering W aheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, W aheguru Ji Ki Fateh, each time. Then Amrit is poured five times in his eyes, and five times in his hair. Each time the candidate utters the above formula. Whatever is left in the pot is drunk by the candidates one by one. Then the candidate is to

recite the Mul Mantra five times. One of the five then tells the candidates of the vows of discipline and the commands of Guru Gobind Singh. Hereafter they are the Khalsa. Their father is Guru Gobind Singh and their mother is Mata Sahib Kaur. Their nativeplace is Kesgarh. They are to offer daily prayer (Nitname), to contribute or use Daswand (one-tenth of income) regularly for religious and charitable purposes and to wear the five Kakars. They are to keep away from four Kurahats (misdeeds), namely the cutting of hair, eating Hala! meat, adultery, and use of tobacco. If they do any of these misdeeds, they must be rebaptised. They are also to refrain from doing certain minor offences called Tankhahs.\*

After ther ceremony, one of the five offers prayers and reads a passage from the Holy Book. If the candidate is one who formerly professed another religion, he must be renamed and given a Sikh name. At the end, all the baptised Sikhs eat *Karah parsad* out of the same vessel.

119. Anand Marriage. The Anand form of marriage has been in vogue from the days of Guru Amardas. It is also mentioned in the Rahatnamas.

<sup>\*</sup>For details of Khalsa Disciplince, see para 109.

The Anand form was however legalised in 1909 by an Act of the Indian Legislature called the Anand Marriage Act.\*

A formal bettrothal is not essential. However, the betrothal, if it takes place, is very simple. The relations of the boy go to the house of the

- 1. This Act may be called the Anand Marriage Act, 1909.
- 2. All marriages which may be or may have been duly solemnized according to the Sikh marriage ceremony called 'Anand' shall be, and shall be deemed to have been, with effect from the date of solemnization of each respectively, good and valid in law.
- 3. Nothing in this Act shall apply to:
  - (a) Any marriage between persons not professing the Sikh religion, and
  - (b) Any marriage which has been judicially declared to be null and void.
- 4. Nothing in this Act shall affect the validity of any marriage duly solemnized according to any other marriage customary among the Sikhs.
- 5. Nothing in this Act shall be deemed to validate any marriage between persons who are related to each other in any degree of consanguinity or affinity which would, according to the customary law of the Sikhs, render a marriage between them illegal."

<sup>\*&</sup>quot;Whereas it is expedient to remove any doubts as to the validity of the marriage ceremony common among the Sikhs called *Anand*, it is hereby enacted as follows:

girl where they are welcomed and entertained. Then a Kirpan and few sweets are given to them for the boy. This meeting is held in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib.

The boy and the girl can be married after they have reached maturiy. A convenient date is fixed by both parties to celebrate the marriage.

The bride-groom with his friends and relatives goes to the house of the bride or a Gurdwara when the bride is also present, sometime in the evening. The parties sing hymns and after prayer welcome each other. This is called Milni. Early next mornine, the two parties assemble in the presence of Guru Granth Sahib and after Asa-di-Var, the bride and bridegroom are seated in front of the Holy Book. The bride sits on the left side of the bridegroom. Then the Granthi (preist) or any person asks the couple and their parents to stand up and invoke God's blessing. Then he tells them about the new phase of life they are to enter and their respective duties. Marriage is a companionship for spiritual advancement and not for physical enjoyment. Thereafter, the scarf of the bridegroom is placed in the hands of the bride and both stand up.

Then the four hymns (Lavan) are read out, one by one from the Holy Book The first hymn (Lavan) emphasises the duties of family-life. The second hymn indicates the growth of love and awe. The third hymn lays stress on restraint or self improvment. The fourth hymn mentions the harmony of perfect equipoise or bliss derived marriage. This initiation into a householder's life—Grista Dharam—requires fidelity of the wife to the husband—Patibart—and fidelity of the husband to the wife—Istribart.

After the recitation of each Lav, the couple go round Guru Granth Sahib, the bridegroom keeps in front and the bride behind him, the musicians or sangat repeat the same Lav. At the end of each Lav, the couple bow down and take their seats. Thereafter the Anand is read. After Ardas, Karah parsad is distributed to all present. This ceremony is generally followed by a reception or lunch for the bridegroom's party. It is desirable that the boy and the girls should take Amrit before marriage. This form of marriage is open to Sahajdhari Sikhs also. There is no change in the ceremony either for remarriage or widow-marriage.

120. The Death Ceremony. Near the bed of

the departing person, friends and relatives read the Japji or Sukhmani to console themselves and the dying one. At the time of actual death, those present utter Waheguru, Waheguru. Crying or lamentation is forbidden in Sikhism. dead body is then bathed, clothed and equipped with the five symbols of the Khalsa and taken in a procession or direct to the cremation-ground or creamatorium. When the flame is applied to the dead-body, some one reads the Sohla and offers prayers for the comfort of the departed soul. Then the gathering disperses. Where cremation is not possible, the body is thrown into a river or the sea Charred bones and ashes of the dead are gathered and thrown into the nearest river. Generally the bereaved family keeps a path of Guru Grath Sahib in its home or in a Gurdwara. On the tenth day, friends and relations attend the Bhog ceremony and then a prayer is offered for the solace of the departed person. The ceremony ends with the distribution of Karah parsad. Sikhism forbids the building of monuments over the remains of dead persons.

"121. Path and Bhog. The Holy Book is kept open in the room or Pandal and some one sits

before it. After Asa-di-Var or Kirtan, \*Anand Sahib is read. Then follows Ardas in which a blessing for beginning of the Path is invoked. Thereafter the Path begins. The Sangat disperses at the end of Japji, when the Karah Prasad is distributed. The Akhand Path is read without a break and is generally completed within 48 hours. A Sadharan Path takes seven to several days. It is read intermittently till it is completed. At the time of *Bhog* (completion of reading), the *Saloks* of Guru Teg Bahadur, the Mundawani and Rag Mala, which cover the last four page are recited before the Sangat. Then the Rumal or clothpiece is spread over the Granth Sahib. After the reading of Anand Sahib and Ardas, Karah Parsad is distributed to all present. The Path can be read by Sikhs and non-Sikhs, by boys and girls without distinction. It must, however, be noted that those who read Path should take bath before-hand and wear clean clothes. The Path need not be read by a Granthi or Sewadar. Generally the reading of Path is undertaken by the Sangat or a family. The practice of Akhand Path (continuous reading) began in the eighteenth

<sup>\*</sup>Kirtan means the singing of hymns, either individually or in chorus. The singer is generally helped by musical instruments. (For details, see para 36.)

century when Sikhs had to take refuge in jungles and were not sure of staying at any place for more than 48 hours. The reading of *Path* with devotion gives spiritual benefit and solace to the individual.

122. The Sikh Supplication. The Supplication or Ardas has been handed down to the community from the days of Guru Gobind Singh. The first part of it contains a few verses of Guru Gobind Singh invoking God and the first nine Gurus. The second part of it recounts the events of Sikh history and how the community has passed through struggle and trial to the reform of temples and confirmation of Sikh traditions. The third part pertains to the reciter's own spiritual thoughts or the special purpose of the prayers or the occasion for it. It ends with a short verse seeking a bright future for the Panth and the good of all.

The Sikh believes in a personal God. He must go to him every now and then, morning evening or in time of need. The Sikh recites the prayer before undertaking a journey, opening a business or occupying a new house or making a new start in life. Even if he has no time for

a regular Ardas, he will recite a short prayer.\* The Sikh prayer can be led by any one. This has been done to discourage the growth of the priestly class.

The Sikh prayer is both personal and congregational. It seeks grace for the individual and the community. At the end, it invokes blessings and prosperity for the whole of mankind. The prayer is congregational in the nature of its contents. It recounts the sacrifices and the services of the Panth, of which everyone present is a part. It offers solace to troubled souls and given peace to afflicted persons. Prayer joins the invoker to the Invoked. It makes no mention of the enemies of the Sikhs at whose hands they had to suffer tortures. It only describes the heroism of Sikhs who laid down their lives for the faith.

The Supplication or Sikh prayer is given below.\*\*

"Ik Onkar Sri Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh."

Having first remembered God the Almighty, think of Guru Nanak. Then of Angad Guru,

<sup>\*</sup>Perseverance in prayer yields results. Guru Nanak says, "If a man stands like a beggar at His door, the Lord shall hear him."

<sup>\*\*</sup>Teja Singh: Sikh Prayer, Amritsar, 1957.

and Amar Das and Ram Das, may they help us! Remember Arjan, Hargobind and the Holy Har Rai.

Let us think of the holy Harkrishan, whose sight dispels all sorrows. Let us remember Teg Bahadur and nine treasures shall come hastening to our home. May they all assist us everywhere! May the Tenth King, the holy Guru Gobind Singh, the lord of hosts and the protector of the faith, assist us everywhere!

Turn your thoughts, O Pure ones, to the teachings of Guru Granth Sahib and call on God! Waheguru!

The Five Blessed ones, the Master's four sons, Forty Immortals, and other righteous, steadfast and long suffering souls: think on their deeds and call on God! Waheguru!

Those men and women, who keeping the Name in their hearts, shared their earning with others, who plied the sword and practised charity, who saw other's faults but overlooked them: think of their deeds and call on God! Waheguru!

Those who to purge the temples of long standing evils, suffered tnemselves to be ruthlessly beaten or imprisoned or to be shot, cut up or burnt alive with kerosene oil, but did not make any resistance or utter even a sigh of complaint, think of their patient faith and call on God! Waheguru!

Now the whole Khalsa offers his prayer. Let the whole Khalsa bring to his mind the name of the wonderful Lord. And as he thinks of Him, may he feel completely blessed. May God's protection and grace extend to all the bodies of the Khalsa wherever they are. May the Lord's glory be fulfilled, and His dispensation prevail. May victory attend our charity and our arms.' May God's word help us. May the Khalsa always triumph. May the Sikh chorus, banners, mansions abide for ever, the kingdom of justice come! May the Sikh be united in love. May the hearts of the Sikhs be humble, but their wisdom exalted, their wisdom in the keeping of the Lord. O, Khalsa, say Waheguru! Waheguru! O True King! O Loved Father! In these ambrosial hours of the morn, we have sung thy sweet hymns, heard thy life-giving Word, and have discoursed on Thy mainfold 'blessings. May these things find a loving place in our hearts and serve to draw our souls toward Thee!

Save us, O Father, from lust, wrath, greed,

worldly attachment, and pride, and keep us always attached to Thy feet.

O Grant the Sikh the gift of Sikhism, the gift of Thy Name, the gift of faith, the gift of confidence in Thee and the gift of reading and understanding Thy Holy Word.

O King, Father. loving Father, through Thy grace, we have spent the night in peace and happiness; may Thy grace extend to our labours of the day too, so that we may, according to Thy will, do what is right.

Give us light, give us understanding, so that we may know what pleaseth Thee.

We offer this prayer in Thy presence, O wonderful Lord, forgive us our sins, help us to keep ourselves pure. Bring us into the fellowship of only those men of love, in whose company we may remember Thy Name.

Through Nanak, may Thy Name forever be on the increase; and may all men prosper by Thy Grace.

Sri Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Sri Waheguru Ji Ki Fateh.

# CHAPTER X

# **GURU GRANTH SAHIB**

123. Compilation of Guru Granth. Guru Arjan gave a central place of worship to the Sikhs in Harmander Sahib. What now he wanted was a scripture for the Sikhs. So he collected from Bhai Mohan, the son of Guru Amar Das, the hymns of the first three Gurus and some Bhagats, and added to them the compositions of his father Guru Ramdas, and his own. He got the Adi Granth written by Bhai Gurdas. Guru Arjan gave the copy to Bhai Bano for binding. He took it for binding to Lahore and on the way prepared a copy. This is known as Bhai Bano's copy. Guru Arjan got the original after binding. He installed the Holy Book at Harmander in 1604. Baba Buddha was appointed as its first Granthi or keeper. This copy passed into custody of Bhai Dhirmal, son of Guru Hargobind, who refused to give it to the Guru. Subsequently some Sikhs brought this copy to the ninth Guru who returned it to Dhirmal. It is said that Guru Gobind Singh stayed at Damdama Sahib for nine months in 1706 and dictated the whole Adi Granth to Bhai Mani Singh. Undoubtedly, the Guru expunged certain unauthorised pieces which had crept into some pirated copies and gave it a final form.

But according to S. Teja Singh and Ganda Singh, there was a copy of the Adi Granth at Dacca dated 1675. Another copy of the Granth was found at Patna in 1691 which contains the hymns of Guru Tegh Bahadur at proper places.\* But it must be noted that it was on the copy prepared at Damdama Sahib that the Gurudom was bestowed in 1708.\*\*

124. Gurbani and Bhagatbani. The major principle of compliation was that verses which praised God and denounced superstition and caste were to be included in the Holy Book. As regards the compositions of Bhagats, generally the same principle was observed. Guru Arjan included the verses of those who believed in the unity of God and brotherhood of man. He rejected the compositions of four religious men

<sup>\*</sup>G B. Singh in his "Sri Guru Granth Sahib Deean Prachin Beeran" in Panjabi enumerates 30 different copies of the Adi Granth.

<sup>\*\*</sup>Arnold Toynbee: The Adi Granth is the Sikh's perpetual Guru (spiritual guide).

of Lahore: Kahna, Chhaju, Shap Hussain and Pilo. Kahna's mystical idealism did not suit the Guru. Kahna recited the following verse:

"I am He, I am He, Sung by Vedas and Puranas Whom none have found yet by search."

Chhajju's poem denounced woman as the root of all evil:

"Look not upon a woman
Not even on her figure cut from paper,
Women are like sly, Baluchi raiders,
Who carry off their men to slay them."

This poem was contrary to Guru Arjan's wiew on the nobility of woman and hence rejected.

Shah Hussain submitted a queer poem: "Be silent, oh, be silent!
What need, my friend for speaking?
There is no need for speaking."

The principle of ascetic silence was opposed to the Guru's creed.

Pilo's rank pessimism was equally hostile to the Guru's faith:

"Those who have died at birth Are better off by far than we." Guru Arjan could not help rejecting such a verse. The Granth Sahib was to be broadbased. It could contain with itself principles of monotheism and the *Bhagti* cult. No puristic or linguistic tests were applied to the compositions. Foreign words, coined words and current words were put into this literary dish. In selecting the musical scores—*Ragas*, the Guru rejected melodies which were expressive of excessive exuberance or unmitigated sadness. Likewise, the Guru employed homely and simple metaphors. Generally speaking, hymns of devotion, the glory of God, men's spiritual efforts and equality of men and women were incorported in the Holy Book.

125. The Contents. The Granth Sanib also called Adi Granth contains compositions of the first five Gurus the ninth Guru, fifteen Bhagats (Jai Dev, Nam Dev, Trilochan, Parmanand, Sadna, Ramanand, Beni, Dhanna, Pipa, Sain, Kabir, Ravidas, Farid, Surday, Bhikhan) and eleven Bhattas (Mathra, Jalap, Harbans, Talya, Salya, Bhal, Kulh Sahar, Nal, Kirat, Gayand, Sadrang).\*

<sup>\*</sup>C.P. Rama Swami Aiyer: The Sikh scripture is the only book in the world where the teachings of otherwise men are given, side by side with those of the Gurus.

Guru Granth contains 5894 hymns. The number of stanzas according to Pincott is 15575. 974 hymns are written by the first Guru, 62 by the second Guru, 907 by the third, 679 by the fourth, 2218 by the fifth, and 115 by the ninth. Among the remaining 922 hymns of Bhagats, the highest number of hymns (541) is by Kabir.

Music forms the basis of the classification of the hymns. Under each Rag, the hymns are arranged in the following order:

- 1. Chaupadas—hymns of four verses.
- 2. Ashtapadas—hymns of eight verses.
- 3. Long poems.
- 4. Chhants—Verses of six lines.
- 5. Short poems.
  - 6. Vars consisting of two or more Saloks and a Pauri.
  - 7. Poems of Bhagats in the same order.

The hymns are further classified according to the musical *clef* (*Ghar*) in which each is to be sung. Although according to the index of *Ragas* in *Ragmala*, the total number of Ragas and Raginis is 84, the Guru has used only 31. So the Granth is arranged firstly according to the Raga, secondly, according to the nature or metre of the poem, thirdly authorship, and fourthly the clef. The ordinary edition of *Adi Granth* contains 1430 pages as under:

- 1. Japji—pp. 1—7.
- 2. Musical hymns—pp. 8—1351.
- 3. Salok Sanskriti-pp. 1352-1359.
- 4. Gatha-pp. 1359—1361.
- 5. Funhe—pp. 1361—1362.
- 6. Chaubole—pp. 1363—1364.
- 7. Saloks of Kabir and Farid—pp. 1364—1384.
- 8. Swayyas of the Gurus and the Bhattas—pp. 1384—1408.
- 9. Saloks of the Gurus—pp. 1409—1428.
- Rag Mala, index of musical measures pp. 1429—1430.
- 126. Characteristics of Adi Granth. At the end, Guru Arjan Dev has summed up the nature of the Holy Book in Munda-wani;

"In this dish are placed three things: Truth, Contentment and Wisdom. There are seasoned with the Name of God which is the basis of all; whoever eats and enjoy it, shall be saved."

Guru Arjan's aim was to provide a book of universal religion, for everybody, everywhere.\* He wanted to guide and regenerate all types of men. He says:

"It is a thing which you cannot afford to neglect.

You must take it to your hearts."

The Adi Granth is both metaphysics and ethics, the science of reality and the art of union with Reality. It gives us a vision of truth, and it opens up new paths for the mind of man.

It is a work of divine inspiration, primarily spiritual and incidentally philosophical. It is a collection of devotional peoms and prayers. Miss Charlotte Mary Tucker called it, 'the book of yearning.' The Gurus accept certain fundamentals laws like *Karma*, cycle of birth and death, Maya etcetera. Guru Arjan incorporated the hymns of some Bhagats who subscribed to the unity of God and the cult of Bhagti. Such hymns

(Spirit of Oriental Poetry)

<sup>\*</sup>Puran Singh: Guru Granth is the scripture of all nations, for it is the lyric of divine love, and all the people of the earth subsist on such glowing lyrical prayer. Guru Granth is but one Song, one Idea and one Life.

enshrine the essence of four centuries (thirteenth to sixteenth) of Indian thought in simple but telling words. Moreover the verses are set to appropriate musical scores.

The Adi Granth is an authentic scripture. The compositions of the Sikh Gurus were preserved, and subsequently collected by Guru Arjan. When the original copy (which is now at Kartarpur) could not he obtained, Guru Gobind Singh dictated it to Bhai Mani Singh. There are no spurious or extraneous poems in it. It is therefore a unique treasure, a noble present to all mankind.\*

Duncan Greenless: Among the world's scriptures, few, if any, attain so high a literary level, or so constant a height of inspiration.

<sup>\*</sup>Opinions of eminent men are given below:

Pearl, Buck: It is a source-book, an expression of man's loneliness, his aspirations, his longings, his cry to God and his hunger for communication with that Being.

Dr. S. Radha Krishnan: We find in the Adi Granth, a wide range of mystical emotions, intimate expressions of the personal realization of God and rapturous hymns of divine love

Dr. Rajendra Prasad: There is much in the Granth Suhib which should interest the people of all faiths. It would provide a healthy corrective to those who may be inclined to lay undue stress on the exclusiveness of languages and religious traditions.

127. Adoration of the Granth. The Adi Granth is the Sikh Bible. Guru Arjan who compiled it installed it with all reverence and devotion at Harmandar at Amritsar in 1604. He emphasised the importance of the Granth in the following peom:

The race of man is saved!

God's word goes to the people, blessing them

And bestowing immortality on them.

My house is full of the light

Of the song of life to-day!

This is the staff on which

The old and the miserable, the stra

The old and the miserable, the strayed and rich shall lean

In their distress, and obtain solace,

People of God! come, assemble, live in this

light

Dissolve this song into your soul.
Rejoice and partake of this immortal feast.

The Granth contains Gurbani or the Guru's teaching. It is the Guru incarnate. Guru Gobind Singh installed Guru Granth as the timeless Guru after him.

Guru Granth Sahib is a sort of living Guru in the midst of the Sikhs. Guru means guide or

torchbearer. Guru Granth gives light and good counsel. Those who are in difficulty or trouble read Guru Granth Sahib and obtain solace and comfort from its hymns. It is also used by the time of birth, marriage and death.

Guru Granth is regarded as the body of the Guru and is kept on a raised platform under a canopy, covered in clean clothes. A Pauri is waved over it when it is read. One must put off one's shoes, wash the feet and cover the head before taking one's seat before the Guru. This is a mode of reverence and no idolatory. The service of the Guru is following his instructions and yoking the mind to the Name.

Guru Granth Sahib is a treasure of divine knowledge and mysticism. Guru Nanak says, "My mind is a temple of love. My body is a robe divine. The Sacred Nectar flows in the temple. The Word is my breath and the Song is My blood." It is therefore in the fitness of things that both Sikhs and non-Sikhs show great respect to Granth Sahib.

128. Guru Nanak's Japji. Not without reason, the Japji tops the sacred writings found in the Holy Granth. It is the epitome of Sikh religion

and philosophy. There is a chain of thought and development of the theme of spirituality in this composition.

In the beginning, Guru Nanak defines God in the *mul mantra*. The goal of life is union with the Divine Being. This is possible by following the Guru's path and submission to *hukam*:

How shall we know the Truth? How shall we rend the veil of Un-truth away?

Abide by His Will, and mould yourself to His Will.

O Nanak, that is written in your heart.

Hukum Razai implies the singing of the glories of God. God is manifest in His creation, and all Nature obeys His Law. Man has to obey the Divine Law and then can enter the Kingdom of God.

Normally, every man has to go through the cycle of birth and death on account of his *karam*, but by His Grace, he obtains salvation.

The disciple must follow the Guru's Word. The Guru tells the devotee never to forget the Lord. The gurmukh obeys the Guru in every way. The first step is the listening of the Name.

By careful listening, he becomes free from sorrow and sin. The next step is acceptance of the power of the Name, by which understanding is purified. Those who have unswerving faith in the Name liberate their souls and those of their kith and kin from the cycle of birth and death. They are honoured in the Court of God. They recite the different names of the Lord. On the other hand, many men are busy in sin and worldly ambition. Creation is a play of God. This world is a kind of *karam-bhumi*, where effect must follow cause. Just as dirty clothes are cleansed by soap, in the same way, man's evil in removed by the Name:

When a garment is defiled, it is rinsed with soap-suds.

So when the mind is polluted with sin, we must scrub it with the love of the Name.

How vast is God's expanse? How great is His universe and His creation! Religious leaders and spiritualists have failed to measure His powers. He has created millions of regions, both upper and lower. No one can describe His bounties; no one can visualize His Infinitude. He alone knows Himself.

Guru Nanak writes, "Just as rivers cannot size up the ocean, in the same way, the devotee cannot assess God's greatness."

He is the King of kings. Millions of gods and goddesses, angels and spirits sing His praises, and yet know not the extent of His powers. He directs Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva according to His law.  $Y \circ ga$ , is the conquest of the ego, the control over the 'self'. And yet we need His grace.

The disciple has to pass through Five Stages before he merges in the Infinite.

In three verses (*Pauri* 35 to 37), Guru Nanak elaborates the five planes of spiritual life:

- (a) Dharam Khand: This is the Plane of Law, where the devotee understands the basis of the universe, which is governed by a certain regularity. Nights, seasons, water, fire and air are controlled by God's law. It this plane of duty man learns righteous and moral conduct as the first step towards divinity.
- (b) Gian Khand: This is the Plane of Knowledge or Reason. How did God create forms, colours, moons, the various types

of life, and the different regions? There is some purpose behind creation, and this is revealed in the Plane of Reason. The profound knowledge of spiritual values make a man proceed on his spiritual journey.

- (c) Saram Khand: This is the Plane of Spiritual Effort. Beauty is the presiding deity of this realm. Here, understanding, intuition and wisdom are moulded. Here, the genius of the sage and the seer finds its best expression. Spiritual efforts never go unrewarded.
- (d) Karam Khand: This is the Plane of Grace.\*

  The devotees who serve Him without motive or self iterest, and submit to His will enter the region of Grace. Here, we find congregations of holy men who enjoice in the Lord's persence.
- (e) Sach Khand: This is the Realm of Truth. God lives in this region and watches the working of the universe. He sees His

<sup>\*</sup>Guru is not opposed to spiritual effort, rather both grace and effort go together. Bhai Gurdas writes: "If a disciple walks one step towards God, the Lord advances a million steps toward him."

creation and rejoices in it. The true saints abide in bliss here, and are in tune with Him.

In the penultimate verse of the Japji, Guru Nanak lays down the code of discipline for the disciple. He wants the seeker to practise the following:

- (i) Chastity, or control of the body and the mind.
- (ii) Steady effort and perseverence in following the spiritual path.
- (iii) Use of reason and understanding which illumines the mind.
- (iv) Respect for the basic truths of all religions.
- (v) Fearlessness, due to perfect faith in God.
- (iv) Love of God, which chastens and purifies.
- (vii) The Divine Name, which leads to salvation.

## Guru Nanak says:

Make continence your furnace, patience the goldsmith, Understanding the anvil, divine knowledge your tools, The fear of God the bellows,
austerities the fire.
Divine love the crucible,
and melt God's name therein,
In such a true mint,
the Word shall be coined.

In the epilogue, the saloka, Guru Nanak affirms that those who meditate on the Name will have radiant faces, beaming with Divine Light, and they will bring joy and salvation to many people.

129. The Sukhmani. The aim of the Sukhmani—The Psalm of Peace—is to comfort the mind and give man a sense of peace. In the words of Guru Arjan, 'he who who listens to it with love, and gives it a place in his heart shall be able to commune with the Lord.' A man who is fed up with life or overwhelemed by sorrow or anxiety will derive consolation and peace from it.

Peace of mind comes through meditation, through concentration on the attributes of God. This has to be done in a spirit of humility and supplication for His Grace. Study of scriptures, charities and sacrifices are meaningless without the spirit of self-surrender. The man who meditates on God serves His creation in everyday life. He is ready to sacrifice his comforts, nay himself, for the good of others.

There is a gradual development of thought in the twenty-four cantos of the Sukhmani. In the first three cantos, the Guru mentions the advantages and the results of the practice of the Name—Simaran. The Name is helpful in the normal business of life. It is superior to the reading of scriptures and other religious formalities.

In cantos four to eleven, Guru Arjan gives his views on the God-man. Man's faculties are weak and he suffers from many disabilities and distractions. God's grace or mercy alone can save him. Man gets a vision of God through the company of the good. The God-man—Superman according to others—is the ideal of every sincere devotee. The popular notions of the God-man—Vaishnavites, Touch-nothing saints, the so-called Bhagats, Salvationists, men of culture—are inadequate, because such persons have only a partial vision of God. There are

many ways of worshipping Him. All seekers need His help and must turn to Him for strength and grace.

Cantos twelve to twenty mention the process by which God's grace can be won Self-conceit and slander of saints bring their own punishment. Only by self-surrender or resignation to the will of God can we earn God's favour. God is Truth and nothing but the Truth. He inspires His servants. His truest servant is the Guru who moulds the lives of the disciples. The Guru inspires the disciple with the love of the Name. Unending peace and joy are obtained by meditation on the Name.

In the last four cantos—twenty to twenty-four—Guru Arjan given his own views on the Name. The Name covers both the personal and absolute aspects of God. God is present in His creation. In the Absolute form, God is not subject to matter, time or space. God transcends and unifies all. He pervades everything and is yet unaffected. The singing of the Name brings its own reward. The Psalm of peace confers the following benefits on the reader:

<sup>&#</sup>x27;Beauty, intellect, wisdom,

Evenness of vision and realisation of oneness in diversity

All these are realised by him who recites the Sukhmani.

As the Holy Word is breathed into his heart by the Guru.

130. Gitru Granth as Literature. Panjabi language is said to have emerged from Apbhransh about 1000 A.D. In the twelfth century, Baba Farid wrote his saloks in Lehndi dialect. During the next three centuries, India was attacked by muslim adventurers and, therefore, heroic verses known as known as Vars became popular. During this period, the Yogis developed a dialect of their own which was called the saint-language and contained terms of systems of Indian philosophy. There was very little literature worth the name before the Sikh Gurus. Moreover, Panjabi was regarded as a language of the vulgar by the aristocratic and Brahamanic sections of Hindu society. The Yogis also wrote in the Sanskrit. Some Sanskriti saloks, are included in the Adi Granth.

The Sikh Gurus preached their principles in the language of the masses. The adopted popular forms of poetry such as salok Chhant, Bara Mahan, Thhittin, Bawan Akhari, Var (heroic ballad). The Var is also a song of praise. The Gurus praised the Name and at the same time denounced egoistic pursuits.

The Sikh Gurus enriched Panjabi literature. The crude and poor language became in their hands a treasury of thoughts. They absorbed the diction of saint-language and current philosophies. In Guru Granth are found words associated with the Vedas, Vedanta, Vaishnavism, Shaivism, Shakatism, Buddhism, Jainism and Islam. Panjabi was also enriched by words of saint-language which owed its origin to Sanskrit.\* Persian and Arabic words came through Islam.

The Japji, Asa-di-Var of Guru Nanak, the Anand of Guru Amardas, the Sukhmani of Guru Arjan are rightly esteemed as classics of Panjabi literature. The verses of the ninth Guru are included in the Adi Granth. Formalism and ritualism of Hinduism and Islam have been condemned. Great spiritual truths have been illustrated through simple and homely similes. The devotional hymns are full of sincerity and emotion.

<sup>\*</sup>Trumpp: The Granth is the treasury of old Hindwi dialects.

Guru Nanak's compositions are pithy and pregnant with meaning. He has not only touched spiritual problems but also social and human relationships.

The example set by the Sikh Gurus led to fruitful results. According to Prof. Puran Singh Muslem saints like Main Mir, Bulle Shah and Shah Hussain began writing peoms in Panjabi under the influence of Guru Arjan. On the whole the Gurus not only enriched the Panjabi language but also inspired other authors to write Panjabi literature.

### CHAPTER XI

# GEMS FROM THE SIKH SCRIPTURES

Here are a few quotations from the scriptures arranged according to themes:\*

#### Actions:

1. We shall have to render an account of our actions.

(I, Asa)

#### Actor:

2. O, foolish man, why do you grumble, When you are rewarded according to your Own actions.

(V. Sukhmani)

As an actor in a play appears in many guises,

So God when His play is ended abondons the guise.

And appears as the one only.

(I, Suhi)

## Adultery:

1. As one lieth with a venomous serpent So it is going to another woman's bed.

(V. Asa)

<sup>\*</sup>All quotations are from the Adi Granth, unless mentioned otherwise.

2. He is blind who deserteth his own wife
And committeh adultery with anothe's wife
In meanness of conscience.

(Namdev, Bhairo)

## Alms-giving:

He who earneth by his own exertions And giveth something out of that in alms, Nanak, he hath found the way to the Lord.

## Back-biter:

A back-biter is indeed a friend He cleanses us from sin.

(Kabir, Gauri)

## Begging:

He who calls himself a preacher And yet goes a-begging, Do not bow to him.

(IV, Sri Rag)

#### Boon:

Grant we this boon
O God, from Thy Greatness,
May I never refrain
From righteous acts;
May I fight without fear
All foes in life's battle,
With confident courage
Claiming Thy Victory!
(X, Chandi Charitra)

### Brahm-Giani:

He Gurbraces voluntary poverty He is the persional frunt if service.

#### Brahmin:

He in deed is a Brahmin Who sees *Brahm* (God) in all Who is disciplined and devoted to Brahm, Who is peaceful and in calm content.

### Bravery:

He is brave who fighteth for downtrodden (Kabir)

#### Caste:

Caste and distines depend upon ones actions and deeds.

#### Chosen:

The Lord's Chosen are absorbed in the Lord's Name.

The pain of birth and fear of death are broken.

They have attained the Imperishable Lord; Great honour is theirs in all regions.

## Compassion

Let compassion be thy mosque, Let faith be thy prayer-mat, Let honest living be thy Koran, Let modesty be the rules of observance.

#### Contentment:

It is the bull of religion, born of mercy and contentment,

That is upholding the whole universe.

(Japji)

#### Creation:

No one can measure or count Thy creation, O'Lord,

I see all as created by Thy Will, sustained by Thy Law,

And Thy compassion, there are worlds beyond worlds,

Millions are the under worlds, millions are the skies.

## Destiny:

Pain and pleasure are thy destiny, Man has to wear these by turns."

#### Discretion:

Farid, if thou hast discretion, Note not with a black mark The ill-deeds of thy neighbour, Look first in thy own heart.

(Farid)

## Ego:

As long as waves rise in the mind and
It is filled with egoism and pride
It will not relish the Word and love of the
name. (IV, Sarang)

Egoism and Name are opposed to each other, The two cannot abide together.

#### Error:

Error is caused by greed, By attachment to the world of illusion When we slough off error, We grasp the one True Lord.

(I, Suhi)

#### Evil:

It is the evil and distortion within ourselves. That keep us from seeing God's perfect world.

## Evil spirit:

Call him an evil spirit,
Who hankereth after Maya, lust, anger and pride. (III, Gujri)

### Exertion:

In this universe that I behold, What can a man get without exertion,

(Japji)

### Faith:

Better be felled to the ground. Than turn a traitor to the faith.

(IX, Salok)

#### Fear .

He alone fears who practises sin,
The virtuous is ever happy,
Why should we fear anybody,
When we know the Lord is true and just?

(III, Sri Rag)

### Foes:

To consider the friends and foes alike In the highway to the Lord. (V, Gujri)

#### Fool:

Call him a perfect fool,
Who is the slave of his passions—greed, lust
And pride. (I, Var Manjh)

## Forgiveness:

Cultivate forgiveness and forbearance, Fulfil your vows. Practise self-control and patience.

### Friend:

I search for the Friend; But my Friend is always with me,

## Gambling:

Gambling is all in vain.

(I, Gauri)

## Garden:

In thy heart's garden, plant
Like seeds, the Word of the Guru,
And water thy garden with love
And all thy orchards shall bear the pracious
fruitage.

Of the Holy Name of God.

## Glory:

By singing His glory
The impurities shall be washed away.

(Sukhmani)

### God:

- 1. God is beyond the *Vedas*, Beyond the Holy Books.
- Nanak saith: O my mind, thou art an image Of God
- 3. Grasp the true source of thy being, God is real; all His creation is real, When He likes He manifests himself, When He likes He stays as one.
- 4. God is the Hidden,He is also the Visible.With attributes and without attributes.

## Good Company:

In good company a man becomes good.

He runs after virtues and washes himself clean of vices. (I, Asa)

#### Guru:

1. The Guru thus having taught you,
Disciples: quench in the water
Of the Lord's Name the four fires
Cruelty, anger, greed and worldly love;

Then the lotus of the inner heart heart shall blossom;

Then the thirst of the soul shall be quenched with nectar.

2. The perfect Guru has dispelled The darkness of delusion from my heart.

## Grace:

When God's grace rains, the seeker Meets a kind Compassionate Guru.

## Heart:

O, mischievous heart, thy Master is seeing every act of thine.

Whatever thou doest, He is beholding, Nothing is concealed from him.

## Heretics:

The heretics are lost in hypocrisy and doubt; The load of covetousness sinketh their boat. (IV. Bilawal)

## Hunger:

Hunger is not satisfied withou eating, Pain leaves when the disease is cured, Under the influence of lust, greed and attachment,

A man does not remember His creator.

(V, Bhairo)

## Humility:

- 1. Know that God dwells in all souls
  And so become the dust of the feet of all.
  This way take to the love of god, regard your
  Life, soul, body and wealth His Property.
  (V. Gond)
- 2. Consider yourself the humblest of the humble.

## Husband:

Do what thy husband biddeth,
Make obedience thy toilet

(V, Asa)

## Hypocrite:

The hypocrite closeth his eyes
And nose to deceive the people,
He closeth his eyes with the fingers saying:
'I see the three worlds';
But he knoweth not what passeth just behind him. (I, Dhanasri)

### Idols:

He who considereth that the stone is God Worshippeth in vain. (Kabir)

## Ill-will:

Do not cherish ill-will for any person, For the Lord resideth in all. (V, Gauri)

## Image:

Nor cast down by sorrow,
Nor over-elate in joy,
Aloof from the power
Of pride, greed and coveting:
Such a man, saith Nanak,
Is the image of God. (IX, Salok)

## Infidal:

The infidel hath tasted not the Divine Love: He is suffering from the thorn of pride.

(IV, Gauri)

## Ingrate:

He who talks evil of him of whose salt he eats
Only he can know the punishment inflicted
upon him. (Japji)

### Intoxication:

By drinking wine,
One invites much misery. (I, Bilawal)

## Introspection:

Those are pure who know what they are!

#### Karma:

Karma is the cause of birth in this world, But salvation can be obtained by His Grace.

## Knowledge:

(i) Like cawing of a crow, some people repeat words of knowledge,

But their hearts are full of greed, falsehood any vanity.

Without the Name, they will be found out in the end. (II, Bilawal)

(ii) Make knowledge your yeast,
The praise of God the bread you eat,
And the fear of God your meat.
This, O Nanak, is the true spiritual food.
Make divine Name your sustenance.

(IV, Bihagra)

#### Lotus:

Always look up on High, living amongst thy kith and kin,

As the lotus that hath its roots in mud.

(IV, Maru)

### Love :

- (i) Not by intellectualisation, not by study, Nor by cleverness can He be attained.
   Only through Love we can reach Him, And that too, only if He so wills.
- (ii) A life devoid of love is a flower blooming in wilderness,

With nobody to enjoy its fragrance.

(Kabir, Gauri)

## Maya:

That is Maya, which makes one forget the Lord,

Produces attachment and creates duality.
(III, Anand)

### Medicine:

Tear off all other prescriptions and take the medicine of His Name;

The fever of sins shall vanish and thou shalt get tranquillity.

## Meditation:

Nanak! Meditate on God's Name, ever optimistic be,

Act upon His Will, think good of humanity.

## Metempsychosis:

Through His service,

Metempsychosis can be put to an end.
(Sukhmani)

#### Mind:

This mind of man is a gem, a diamond, A pearl of incalculable value.

### Miracle:

- (i) Nanak, call that a miracle Which the Lord graciously bestoweth.
- (ii) Except the true Name, I have no miracle.
- (iii) Miracles delude fools only
  Who have no God in their hearts.

#### Music:

Divine music is heard
In every soul reverberant,
Continuous, self-sustained, a revelation!
Few are the saints
Who are granted this understanding,
Nanak, release from hondage
Comes from contemplating the Word
Forget not the Holy Name. (I, Sri Rag)

#### Name:

- (i) He whose heart is filled with Nam,
  Realises the pressure of the Lord everywhere.
  Every moment he offers his obeisance to Him.
  He goes beyond the influence of Maya and
  saves all.
  (V. Sukhmani)
- (ii) Brother! the medicine of the Name is within the souls of all of us.

But without the perfect Guru, we do not know how to use it.

The perfect Guru administers it with appropriate precautions.

And the disease never recurs.

(V, Gauri Bawan Akhri)

(iii) For the Lord loves those on whose lips is His name,

Their pride shall vanish and theirs be the bliss.

- (iv) Without the Divine Name,We cannot attain inner peace,Nor still our inner hunger. (I, Sidh-Gosht)
  - (v) The Name will percolate within the heart,
    And give us a feeling of stability and peace.
    The Name of God is the real alchemic elixir.
    The Lord pulls us out of the mud with His
    own hands.

#### Nectar:

Within your own body is the true pool of immortality.

Let your mind drink the nectar there.

#### Omens:

Good or bad omens and moments

Are the inventions of an ignorant mind.

(III, Bilawal)

Omnipotence:

The whole of the creation showeth sings of Thy discipline.

Sayeth Nanak: Only Thou, O Lord!

Art independent and fearless.

(Asa-di-Var)

Omnipresence:

Whatever I behold is all Thy image.

(V, Tilang)

Omniscience:

One looks in front and in rear,
But what can one conseal from Thee!

(I, Gauri)

Pain:

Pain is a medicine, Pleasure is a disease.

Passions:

Without subduing thy passion How can thou find the Lord? (II, Gauri)

Pride:

Pride is the root of evils.

Promise-breaker:

He who fulfilleth not his promise and telleth lies,

Sinneth much and is not worthy to be relied upon. (I, Maru)

### Prostitute:

The prostitute committeth adultery quite shamelessly. (V. Bhairo)

### Radiance:

O. Nanak, their faces are radiant, And in their hearts is joy Born of the music of His Word.

## Remembrance:

Men repeat the name of God with their lips, But peace comes when it fills their hearts. (V. Bawan Akhri)

### Renunciation:

O, Renouncer! Renunciation of luxury, Anger and lust is praise-worthy.

## Repentance:

When a man comes to know of his fault, He should repent of it. (I, Ramkali)

## Resignation:

What thou doest is for my good Nanak seeketh happiness at Thy feet alone. (V. Bilawal)

#### Saints:

The society of saints removeth all sins,
The society of saints secureth comforts,
In this world and the next. (V, Sukhmani)

### Salvation:

If a man loves to see God, How little he cares for salvation and paradise. (I, Asa)

## Self:

He who conquers the self, Conquers the whole world. (Japji)

#### Shrine:

Of all shrines, the most sacred shrine, Nanak, is the heart in which God dwelleth! (Sukhmani)

## Soul:

The soul neither dies,
Nor can it be destroyed. (V, Gond)

### Stream:

As out of a single stream
Countless waves arise,
And, being water, fall
Back in water again
So from God's form emerge
Alive and inanimate things
And since they arise from Him
They shall fall in Him again. (X, Akal Ustat)

#### Talk:

The knowledge of God can not be obtained by mere talk,

Talk will not assist in understanding the Divine Essence.

### Transcience:

- (i) O man! This universe is transient. (V, Gauri)
- (ii) Woe to him who sayeth

  This is my permanent abode. (Kabir, Gaur)

#### Truth:

- (i) Truth is the panacea for all ills, It washeth and driveth away all sins, Nanak boweth to those That have truth within them.
- (ii) Truth makes us free, Truth destroys doubt, Truth destroys every sickness of the soul.
- (iii) Truth is good enough, But higher still is true living.
- (iv) Truth will prevail in the end. (I, Manjh)

#### Universe:

- (i) The universe is a mainfestation of God.
- (ii) No one knows the expanse of the universe.

#### Virtuous:

Day and night shall I remain happy,

If I can get the dust of the feet of the
virtuous. (Asa-di-Var)

### Water wheel:

The water-wheel that will lift From the well of thy soul Is humility and service. Water thy soul's garden, Then the great Gardener Shall find thee acceptable.

(V, Bhairo)

### Wealth:

- (i) There is the peace after earning much wealth.
- (ii) Why art thou crying for wealth;All thy yearning for riches is false.

(V. Gauri)

#### Wine:

By drinking wine, one comes to grief.

## Womanhood:

Why should we call her evil, Who giveth birth to kings and great men.

(Asa-di-Var)

#### Yama:

Through contact with a saint,
The perpetrator of even ten million sin is saved
Yama dare not approach him.

## Yoga:

- (i) He who controls the five sensesAnd does not falterKnows the way of Yoga.
- (ii) To line untainted in the midst of temptation Is to practise the true Yoga technique.

# CONCLUSION

What about the future of Sikhism? The future of Sikhism is bright and hopeful. This is shown by their numerical strength. The Sikh population in the Panjab doubled in the 60 years from 1880 to 1940. They have had a large number of converts both from Hindus and the Scheduled castes. In the past they had certain advantages which attracted recruits to the fold, as for instance political weightage, preference in the army and civil services. After independence (1947), they lost their privileged position. Moreover the growing indifference of modern youths to religion, has been responsible for apostacy. This point has made Khushwant Singh affirm that Sikhism will be swallowed up by Hinduism at no distant date. This, however, is an imaginary fear. Sikhism has thriven even under the edge of steel and it is bound to flourish extensively in this age of democracy and toleration. Sikhism will gather momentum, though followers may decrease, because the strength of a religion does not lie in the numerical figure of its adherents, but in the dedication and

conviction of its followers. A small but devoted body of Sikhs is better than a large and unwieldy mass of Sikhs with a shaky or indifferent faith. Some leaders have predicted a bright future of Sikhism, because they have abundant faith in the Sikh peasant. His simplicity, his bluntness, his integrity, his reverence for the Guru and Gurbani, his hospitality and fellow-feeling, above all his belief in an honest living and selfless-service hold the promise of a mighty rejuvenation of the Sikh brotherhood.

Prophets may come and go, but precious truths will live for ever. Sikhism could not be stamped out by the oppression of Aurangzeb and Faruksayar on account of its innate vitality. The Sikhs bore the brunt of the Partition of India in 1947 but never gave up faith. Not one of them took up beggary. They dispersed to different countries to earn an honourable living. God has scattered them all over the world so that they may carry forward the mission of Sikhism.

Sikhism is a living and universal religion. Its principles of love of all, service and sacrifice, the company of men of God and meditation on the Name have won appreciation of the thinkers of the West.\* Guru Gobind Singh said that so long as the Sikhs remained pure and distinct, they would enjoy honour and glory. If religious schism and political dissenssions do not divide the community into compartments, Sikhism may be sure of a long and prosperous career. Organisations like the Shiromani Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee, local Singh Sabhas, the Chief Khalsa Diwan, All India Sikh Students' Federation and Akali Dal are unmistakable symbols of the life and energy that is the Khalsa.

Moreover, the Adi Granth is bound to mould the thinking and destiny of coming generations. Prof. A. Toynbee remarks, "In this coming religious debate, the Sikh religion and its scripture the Adi Granth will have something of special value to say to the rest of the world." So in consonance with our tradition of inspired optimism—Chardi Kala—we may feel assured of a bright future of the Sikh Faith, both numerically and intrinsically.

<sup>\*</sup>Prof. A.E. Suthers: If the Jew or Christian in good conscience cannot endorse all in Sikhism, nevertheless he will be quick to recognise and honour the spirit of religious sincerity expressed in the Sikh Scripture, the high ethical level of the writings and the essential inwardness of true religion.

<sup>\*\*</sup>A. Toynbee: Selections from the sacred writings of Sikhs, London, 1960, p. 11.

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#### **GLOSSARY**

Ahankar: Conceit, egoism.

Akal: Not subject to time or death, hence applied to God.

Amrit: The water of immortality, also applied to the baptism ceremony of the Sikhs.

Ardas: Prayer, here the Sikh Supplication.

Atma: The self, the spirit, the soul.

Avtar: Incarnation, rebirth..

Bhagat: Saint.

Bhagti: Meditation, Love of God.

Brahm: God, also one of the Hindu Trinity.

Brahmacharya: State of continence or celibacy.

Brahm-giani: God-illumined soul, a man who has realised God.

Buddi: Faculty of reasoning, also intution.

Chitt: Mind-stuff, heart.

Darshan: Vision of divine light, system of philosophy.

Daswant: One-tenth of income dedicated to charitable purposes.

Dharam: The Law, also religion, duty, justice, right conduct.

Dhyan: Meditation.

Gadi: Literally seat, hence succession.

Grahsta: The life of a house-holder

Gunas: Attributes, modes of psychics states which are three.

Gurbani: The voice of the Guru, hence the hymns of the Adi Granth.

Gyan|Gian: Knowledge, particularly spiritual knowledge.

Haumai: Egoism, conceit, also duality.

Hukam: Order, particularly the Will of God.

Jiva: The soul.

Jivan-Mukt: The living immortal, one who has realised God while living.

Kafir: Non-believer, heathen, irreligious.

Kam: Lust, fornication.

Karma: The law of action followed by reaction, also man's fate.

Khalsa: Pure, noble, hence the order created by Guru Gobind Singh.

Kirtan: Singing of hymns.

Krodh: Anger, wrath.

Langar: Free Kitchen, free community-dining among the Sikhs.

Lavan: Marriage-hymns.

Liv: Being in tune with the Infinite, absorption in the Holy Name.

Lobh: Greed, hoarding.

Mantra: Mystic word, religious formula.

Massands: Professional priests.

Maya: Meterial wealth, outward phenomena, also illusion.

Missal: Community or group of persons.

Moh: Worldly attachment.

Moksha: Liberation from birth and death.

Mukti: Salvation, freedom from birth and death.

Nam: The Practice of the Name, also God.

Name: The Word of God.

Panth; A community having common ideals and principles, also the Sikh community.

Parchar: Missionary work.

Path: The reading of Sikh scripture.

Purdah: Veil, curtain.

Sadhana: Spiritual effort, right action.

Sahaj: Mental equipoise, serenity, spiritual attainment.

Samadhi: State of contemplation, being in tune with the Infinite.

Sangat: Religious congregation.

Sanyas: Renunciation, keeping aloof from worldly things.

Sati: The practice of widow-burning, a pious woman.

Satsang: Association with holy men.

Shahid: Martyr.

Shakti: Power, courage.

Simaran: Remembrance of the Holy Name, practising the presence of God.

Turya: The fourth state of spiritual peace.

Waheguru: The Wonderful Lord, the Holy Word of the Sikhs.

Wismad: Feeling of wonder, ecstasy.

Yoga: Union, hence the path of spiritual endeavour.

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